



**IMPACT OF THE AHL-E-HADITH MOVEMENT ON
CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM SOCIETY IN INDIA**

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NAGHMA**

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Abstract

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Ahl-e-Hadith

The term ‘Ahl-e- Hadith’ literally means ‘people of the Hadith’, signifying the claim of this Movement to be the strict followers of the Prophet’s (peace be on him), Sunnah or practice, as reflected in the Hadith tradition. In addition to the term Ahl-e-Hadith, they refer to themselves, as do the Saudi ‘*Muwahhidun*’ (the Unitarians), as Salafis, or those who follow the Salaf-e-Salih or the ‘pious predecessors’ and as ‘*monotheists*’.

Ahl-e-Hadith Movement in India

Ulama-e-Ahl-e-Hadith traced its origin from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) Khulafa-e –Rashidun, Sahaba, the four Sunni Imams (in the light of the Qur’ān and Sunnah) and Sunni Mujtahid (true followers of Qur’ān and Sunnah). In India scholars are of the opinion that this movement is an off-shoot of *Waliullah-i-Movement* and the *Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyyah* movement of Syed Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed. Hence we are given here a background of Shah Waliullah and his Thoughts.

In the eighteenth century, the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent witnessed two important processes: the decline of the Mughal Empire, which may conveniently be dated from the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, and the beginning of an intellectual and political re-awakening signalled Shah Waliullah (1703-1764), which laid the foundations for a Muslim resistance against British rule in India. The first process, the fall of the Mughal Empire and its causes, does not concern us here. What we are really concerned with is the second process: the beginning of the intellectual and political re-awakening, an event to which the works of Muhammad Siddique Hasan Khan, Nawab of

Bhopal, are closely related. His works were an attempt from an important, if idiosyncratic, angle towards the re-awakening of Muslim on an international level. In order to assess the importance of his life and works in their historical perspective, a brief account of the Indian context in which Shah Waliullah worked will be given. This will be followed by a short description of the activities of Muhammad Siddique Hasan Khan and his followers.

It was the time when Muslim on the whole was indifferent towards their religion. They drifted away from their religious institutions and clung instead to time-honoured customs and traditions. Caste differences and social discrimination which were characteristic of Hindu society found their way into the Muslim social order. The Hindus, according to the Muslim point of view, worshipped their idols in the temples; the Muslims, on the other hand, started showing undue respect to their Pirs and Sufi Saints. They gave charity and devotion in their names, hoping that they would grant their requests. They strongly believed that these Pirs and Sufi Saints, living or dead, were capable of helping them in adversity. Blind faith (*Taqlid*) was the order of the day. The *Fatawa* (religious decrees) of the so-called '*Ulama*' had replaced the tenets of the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*. These *Fatawa* were considered to have the binding force of the commands of God and His Apostle. Anyone who did not follow one of the four *a'imma*, viz. Imam Abu Hanifa (d.150/767), Imam Malik (d.179/795), Imam Shafii (d. 204/819), and Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 241/ 855), was considered to be no more within the pale of Islam.

Sectarianism was also very common. Religious rivalries and squabbles were prevalent among the followers of the four *a'imma* and Sunni and Shiah which blinded their reason. These activities exhausted the energies and capabilities of Scholars without yielding any useful result; on the contrary, they were damaging the common interest of the people. Social conditions were even worse. Widow Remarriage was thought to be immodest- another Hindu influence. Lavish spending on ceremonies on the eve of wedding, funerals, marriages and circumcision was thought being honourable, and Muslims borrowed and got into debt to maintain ceremonial pomp. Islam favours simple celebrations on these occasions, but long association with Hindus made these ceremonies more and more complicated.

Being a gifted man, Shah Wali Allah realised the weaknesses and deficiencies of the Muslims and determined to make them good. After a thorough study of the situation he diagnosed the following symptoms of the underlying factors responsible for the decadence of the Muslim

community: firstly, indifference towards religious institutions and lack of concern for the study of the Qur'ān and its understanding; secondly, economic imbalance; and finally, lack of impressive, dynamic and reliable leadership.

Shah Waliullah first tried to reform the current belief of the people that the Qur'ān could not be translated into another language and to alter their attitude towards the Qur'ān, which they had confined to recitation, regarding it good for curing physical rather than spiritual diseases and for removing of evil spirits from children. Shah Waliullah knew that the main cause of Muslim decadence throughout the world was their complete ignorance of the meaning of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān, the Will of God, was intended to be properly understood and applied in various aspects of individual and communal life, but being in Arabic the people were not familiar with it. Shah Waliullah thus embarked upon the urgent but controversial and dangerous task of rendering the Qur'ān into a language which the '*'Ulama'*' generally spoke and understood. Therefore, he selected Persian- the only language which could serve the purpose- and rendered the Qur'ān into it. It was a clear break with the long and persistent belief of the people, but he convinces them about its necessity, and so they welcomed. His Persian rendering was followed by an interlineal Urdu rendering by his son Shah Abdul Qadir which proved a further great help in the understanding of the Qur'ān, and on which Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan later on based his own exegesis called *Tarjuman al-Qur'ān*.

Secondly, Shah Waliullah explained to the people that ijтиhad (independent judgement in a legal or theological question, based on the interpretation of the four usul) was necessary throughout the ages and that Islam could not be confined merely to the pronouncement of the four Schools. He gave due importance to the contributions of the four *a'immah*, but added that the necessity of *ijтиhad* has been and would be realised throughout the history of the Islam because the problems of the people have been increased with the passing of time, and, if the processes of ijтиhad were to be confined to the eras of the four *a'immah*, it would prevent Islam providing a complete code of conduct for life.

Thirdly, Shah Waliullah argued that the necessary qualifications for the practitioners of ijтиhad were a sound knowledge of the Qur'ān, Hadith, nasikh wa mansukh (abrogating and abrogated verses of the Qur'ān), the decisions and analogies derived by the previous mujtahidun (interpreters of the law), and of the Arabic language. He believed in the dynamic nature of Islam

and its capability for guiding people in all eras and in all circumstance, but warned the ‘ulama’ that if they did not change their stubborn attitude in favour of the inevitability of ijтиhad, its consequences would be disastrous. Describing the attitude of the ‘ulama’ who went beyond the genuine limits of *Taqlid* (accepting blinding as final authority the opinion of a particular Imam), Shah Wali Allah said that they persistently accepted and preserved the decisions and interpretations of past mujtahidun who were men like themselves and liable to err, and considered their *Fatawa* an undisputed and authentic code of conduct. This made them ignore the Qur’ān and the Hadith and lay at the root of their intellectual stagnation.

Shah Waliullah also attacked the false belief of Muslims in Pirs and Sufi Saints. He explained to them that it was sheer ignorance and folly to call on Pirs and Sufi Saints for help, or to go to their tombs and show them undue respect. He said that this kind of reverence shown to the tombs of pirs and saints was equivalent to the acts of *shirk* (polytheism), which Islam came to extinguish. Shah Waliullah also made a shrewd analysis of the causes of economic deterioration which had brought about the decadence of Muslims in India. He said that two things were largely responsible for the instability of the Muslim society: the dependence of a large number of people on the state treasury, without contributing anything in return and, secondly, the exorbitant taxation on the public which they could not afford and which led to revolts against the rulers. Unless these economic ills could be alleviated, society would not lie in peace. Food, clothes, shelter, and rising a family were the basic requirements of life, and without proper provision of these necessities, stability in society is impossible.

Referring to the luxurious life of the rulers, Shah Waliullah warned that when the ruling class indulges in extravagance and pleasure, society suffers, and administration deteriorates, and the people have to pay the price. The consequences must be chaos and disorder, deterioration of fundamental values, and national demoralisation. At this stage, a people lose their independence and the yoke of subjection is put on their shoulders.

Shah Waliullah also emphasised the need for the rulers to respect all professions and to allow the people to adopt professions according to their choice. A barber, Shah Waliullah argues, is as important and necessary as a shoemaker, or a weaver. He condemned those who favoured class or professional discrimination in society, but suggested agriculture, the backbone of society, should be given top priority over other callings. “The ratio between agriculture and other

professions should be like that of flour and salt,” he wrote. Even this cursory account shows how Shah Waliullah concerned himself with the entire structure of Muslim political, social, economic and religious institutions in India, and his importance to the history of Muslim revivalism is unquestioned.

Although Shah Waliullah did not succeed in arresting the decline of Muslim power, yet his fresh and dynamic ideas had a vast impact on Muslim history. After his death in 1764, his mission was carried on by his sons ‘Abdul Aziz (d. 1827), Shah Rafi al-deen (d. 1833), Shah ‘Abd al- Qadir (d.1826), and Shah ‘Abdul Ghani. They all were noted scholars of their times and each of them tried his best to convey to the Indian Muslims message of their father in the simplest possible manner- arranging special groups for the specific purpose of preaching, and writing many books in local languages of the general public.

This reformation movement then took another course- Shah ‘Abdul Aziz issued a fatwa , declaring India *Dar al-Harb* and proclaiming a jihad, against all those who occupied Muslim cities, obligatory on all Indian Muslims. He was constantly on the lookout for a man of outstanding character who could fight against the current non-Islamic customs on the one hand, and lead jihad against the occupants of the Muslim cities on the other. He found this man in the person of Syed Ahmad Shaheed.

Syed Ahmad Shaheed was born in the town of Outh in the village of Bareilly in 1786. By temperament not a scholar, he made his way to Luck now in pursuit of employment; he succeeded in finding a post with Amir Khan, who afterwards became the Nawab of Tonk and supporter Syed Ahmad’s movement. After some time, he lost interest in this post and resigned. By now he seemed to have developed a taste for learning, so he left for Delhi, which was the centre of learning and the residence of the family of Shah Waliullah. From Delhi, Shah Abdul Aziz sent him to Akbarabad, where his brother Shah Abdul Qadir was lecturing. There he read the Qur’ān and grammar, but did not make much progress with his studies. He was now inclined towards mysticism and, so, he became the pupil of Shah Abdul Aziz in the Naqshbandi tariqah of Tasawwuf.

He started a comprehensive programme of preaching throughout India. Maulana Muhammad Ismail (d. 1831) and Maulana Abdul Hay (d. 1827), the pupil and son in law of Shah Abdul Aziz,

joined him in this task. They travelled over a large part of India- Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Rampur, Bareilly, Shahjahanbad, Benares and Lucknow- and explained to the people the harmful consequences of spending recklessly on ceremonies. To show to the people that widow remarriage was not a heinous act, as it was considered to be, Syed Ahmad himself married a widow. Their insistence was mainly on such things as the unity of Allah, honesty, truthfulness and futility of showing undue respect to pirs and saints. These teachings were compiled by Muhammad Ismail Shaheed and Maulana Abdul Hay into book form under the title *Sirat-i-Mustaqim*.

During his Rampur journey, Syed Ahmad met some Afaghinah (sing. Afghan) who told him about the cruel treatment of Muslim by Sikhs, and invited him to deliver them from these brutalities. In response to this invitation, he determined to initiate jihad against the Sikhs on the North West Frontier (the Present Peshawar and Malakand Divisions).

Before starting the jihad Syed Ahmad went on a Pilgrimage to Makkah in 1822. His book Sirat-i-Mustaqim was circulated among the pilgrims and greatly appreciated by them. This contradicts the opinion of those who say that Syed Ahmad imbibed the doctrines of Wahhabism during this journey, and his future activities in India owe their momentum to them.

After returning to India they started preparations for the jihad. He sends Muhammad Ismail and Maulana ‘Abdul Hay to various parts of India to convince the people about the legality and necessity of the jihad. This message of the jihad was so widely spread that it became a main topic and discussion throughout India. In 1826 he and his 7000 Mujahidun set out on the jihad. As he could not pass his force through the Punjab, a Sikh controlled area, he first went to Afghanistan and from there to Peshawar through the Khyber Pass.

The first battle against the Sikhs was fought at Akora in 1826 and resulted in the Sikhs' defeat. The second attack was made at Hadro a village on the east of the Indus River near Lahore, and the Sikh army was defeated again. These skirmishes went on till the mujahid forces were defeated at Balakot (Hazara, west Pakistan) and Syed Ahmad and Muhammad Ismail were slain by the forces of Sher Singh.

Causes for His Failure against the Sikhs. Why Ahmad Shaheed did not succeed in this mission is a question which can be answered only by those with a close understanding of the Pathan tribes.

Those who know the Pathans can understand now some customs and traditions become so dear to the people that in time they replace the genuine tenets. Caroe's analysis of the factors behind Syed Ahmad Shaheed's failure shows an acute understanding of the Pathan and his history.

Firstly, Syed Ahmad Shaheed started preaching to the Pathans that all marriageable women should at once be married and the age long, but non-Islamic, customs and traditions regarding marriage be abandoned. According to Pathan customs, the institutions of marriage and wedding have a definite procedure.

After his death, the East India Company began to take this movement seriously. Syed Ahmad's mission was carried on by his followers. Patna, Sitana and Sadiqpur were its main centres. It was by now an organised movement and had a number of bases in all parts of India where volunteers were trained to raise funds for the jihad, and to preach to the people including the police and the soldiers.

Beside the reform movement of Shah Waliullah and Syed Ahmad Shaheed, a contemporary reform movement had also been started in Arabia under the leadership of Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab al-Najdi (d. 1703) in reaction to the contemporary Muslim Society which, under Ottoman rule, was suffering from the same symptoms as those of India's. He, therefore, placed great emphasis (as a comparison between his doctrines and those of Muhammad Siddique Hasan Khan will later show) on the unity of God, a principle that stresses the unity of action and purpose, both essential for the establishment of a dynamic social order; the absurdity of showing undue respect to saints and pirs, and tombs; return for guidance to the Qur'an and the Sunnah alone; their rejecting the idea of accepting as a final authority the interpretations of a particular Imam (legal interpreter of the Shari'ah); the significance of ijtihad; and the evil consequence of following customary rules and regulation, he did not even hesitate to use force to achieve his reforms, in which he succeeded up to a certain extent; but, as he was rigid and tactless, imposing his ideas by the use of force, his movement did not achieve its goal.

Abdul Wahhab was followed by another Yamani Scholar, Muhammad Ibn 'Ali al-Shawkani (d. 1834), the follower of Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328), the follower of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 855). Just as Abdul Wahhab had done, he attacked Taqlid, by writing a book, *al Qawal al-Mufid fi Hukum al-Taqlid*, which created a great stir among contemporary scholars. His other important

contribution in this connection was *Nayl al-Awtar*, a commentary on Ibn Taymiyyah's *al-Muntaqa al-Akhbar*, a voluminous work, which provides rules and regulations on the problems of Fiqh, based on the authentic Hadith of the Prophet. Describing the importance of *al-Muntaqa al-Akhbar*, and what prompted him to write this commentary, he pointed out, that it "has become a source-book for majority of the 'Ulama' when they are in need of finding a legal proof especially in this regional and in these times; upon this sweet spring, the eyes of original thinkers collide with one another and the steps of investigators vie with one another in entering its gates. It has thus become a resort for thinkers whither they repair and a haven for those who wish to flee from the bonds of slavish and blind acceptance of authority." However, he was rather more rational and tactful than some of the reformers, and his works achieved wide circulation and acceptance among literary circles. Moreover, communication by sea by this time had improved considerably, and with it social intercourse between the 'Ulama' of India, Yemen and Makkah increased as well. And it was possibly because of this growing contact that in the 1860's 'Ulama', full of the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah and Shawkani, were found in the courts of the Indian princely states, especially Hyderabad and Bhopal. These 'ulama' introduced the ideas and works of Shawkani and, indirectly, of Ibn Taymiyyah in Bhopal. They gradually spread throughout India.

This was the context into which Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan was born his birthplace was Bareilly, the village of his maternal grandfather, a village that gave birth to Syed Ahmad Shaheed, the champion of the jihad movement. His father, Syed Awlad Hasan Khan, was a strong supporter of Syed Ahmad Shaheed, and accompanied him in his journey to Afghanistan and rendered great services to the cause of Islam.

After the death of his father in 1837, he remained under the care of his mother. When he grew up, he made several journeys to the surrounding districts and met a great number of his father's friends there. On his return to Kanauj he went to Delhi and remained under the tutorship of Sadr al-deen Khan, the Mufti of Delhi. After sixteen months he came back to Kanauj and decided to go to Bhopal in search of employment on his arrival in Bhopal, Syed Jamal al-Deen Khan, the prime minister of Bhopal and a supporter of the jihad movement, recruited him as one of his personal bodyguard. But soon after he was relieved of his duties, owing to his alleged involvement in religious debates of an inflammatory nature.

From Bhopal he went to Tonk, where he stayed with the relatives of Syed Ahmad Shaheed and worked for eight months as an employee of the Siddique Hasan of Tonk, a strong supporter of the jihad movement. Once again Jamal al-deen Khan persuaded the begum to invite him to Bhopal. She assigned Siddique Hasan the duty of writing the history of Bhopal.

Up to this time he was under the influence of the teachings of Shah Wali Allah and Syed Ahmad Shaheed. On his arrival in Bhopal, he came into contact with ‘ulama’ from Yemen in the royal court of Bhopal and studied under their supervision the works of Ibn Taymiyyah and Shawkani. These ‘ulama’, being imbued with the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah and Shawkani, immensely impressed him and, in a few years’ time, fundamentally changed his outlook. His outlook experienced further changes when, in 1869, on his way to Makkah, he read other works of these authors in Hudaydah, Yemen, and Makkah. After his return to Bhopal, he was no more a *Muqallid*; on the contrary, he started writing books against *Taqlid* and the followers of Imam Abu Hanifa who, according to him, were chiefly responsible for the intellectual stagnation of Muslim India, he followed, with certain reservations, Ibn Taymiyyah, Shah Wali Allah and Syed Ahmad Shaheed, Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab and Shawkani in his attack on *Taqlid*, non-Islamic customs and traditions (*bid’ah*) and in his emphasis on the revival of the institution of *Ijtihad* and turning for guidance to the Qur’ān and the Sunnah alone.

Islam is the final form of all previous Faiths. Islam enjoins beliefs in one Allah, the Angels, the Books of Allah, and all the Prophets and in the day of resurrection. Islam does not profess to be a new religion as instructed by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but a continuation of the religious principles established by other Prophets of Allah. It is an inclusive religion which contains within itself all previous faith which went before it. Islam is also a living and potent force in the modern times. The Holy Qur’ān is the fundamental or basic source of Islamic jurisprudence. Next is the importance and authority comes Sunnah or Ahadith. Ahadith itself derives its authority and legal validity from Holy Qur’ān. Ahadith the saying conveyed to man either through hearing or revelation. Hadith the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Sunnah literally means a ways or rule or manner of acting or mode of life. In its Islamic legal terminology, Sunnah indicates the doings, deeds and tacit approval of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him)

It is qual saying of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him), an action or practice of his or a *Taqrir* (Tacit approval), his silent approval of the action or practice of another. The Holy Qur'ān generally deals with the broad principles or essentials of religion, going into detail in very rare cases. The details were generally supplied by the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) himself.

The four orthodox Caliphs took great pains to see that only the correct tradition is narrated. The narrator was asked to swear that he was speaking the truth. Among the judges and traditionist of this period where the four Caliphs that is Hazrat Abu Bakar ®, Hazrat Umar ®, Hazrat Uthman ® and Hazrat Ali ® and the following prominent companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Ahadith in this sense of the reports of the sayings and doings of Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been subjected to keen pursuit and constant study by the Muslim throughout the Muslim world since the very beginning of the history of Islam up to present times. some of them wrote down what he said in Sahifas which were later on read by them to their student and which were preserved in their families and also by the follower (*Tabiun*). After the death Muhammad (peace be upon him), when his companions spread in various countries some of them as well as their follower undertook long arduous journeys, Courted poverty and penury in order to collect them together. Imam Malik's great work is the *Kitab-al-Muwatta* (paved way). It is the oldest corpus jurist of the Sunnah branch of Islamic Jurisprudence that has survived from the early period of Fiqh. The Muwatta was not intended to serve as a collection of hadith but it may be said with equal justice that it is not a book of Fiqh in the same sense in which later books on Fiqh are said to be works on the subject. These books are known as *Al-kutub ul Sittah* or the "Six Sahihs" (the second collections). The Collections of Al-Bukhari and Muslim rank high and are known as "*Al-Sahihain*" i.e. authentic and authoritative. The best known collection on the '*Musnad*' pattern is the Collection of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 855 C.E). The six collection of Ahadith are recognised by Ahl-Sunnah as the Sihah Sittah or the six reliable collections. These are the collection by Muhammad Ibn Ismail Bukhari Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi, Ibn Maja and Nasai. Sihah Sittah the Sahih of Bukhari, holds the first place in several respects.

The earliest completion of such recorded tradition supported in each instance by a chain of authorities tracing it back to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was the first biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) by Ibn Ishaq. Then followed Imam Malik's famous hand book on *Muwatta* based on the same Principle on *Sanad* and *Matn*.

Thereafter followed Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal's work, *Musnad* giving all the tradition attributed to one companion and then going to another.

"The Hadith have elaborated and fixed the academic and practical meaning of the Quranic ayat from every angle. The Hadith have explained the principles relating to all branches of human life in such a miraculous manner that no room has been left for any fraud to resort to his fraudulent methods. The Ahadith of Prophet (peace be upon him) have provided the Ummat with guidance in detail for every aspect of life which will arise until the day of Qiyamah be it faith or practice, free will or fatalism, obedience to government or speaking up against oppression and injustice. Thus noble Qur'an has designated this Ummat as the "*Ummat wast*" of "*balanced nation*".

Imam Malik had based his fiqh on the traditions or Ahadith whether it may be *Musnad* or *Mursil*, Abu Bakr Abhari stated that in *Muwatta* the total number of Mulasil (connected) Ahadith are 1720 and among them 600 *Muwqoof* and 275 are the *qual* of Tabayeen (Sayings of Tabayeen).

Istihsan which means the law of preference or suitableness of an act or juristic equity was accepted by Imam Hanbal as source of law. He says that Istihsan is to abandon a rule or command to adopt another better rule.

Imam Hanbal's method of formulating legal doctrines was of *Ashab-e-Hadith*, therefore was find very few books on principles of *Fiqh* in Hanbalite legal literature, whereas there are numerous works on Hadith. Among Ibn Hanbal's work, the great collection of traditions known as "*Musnad Ahmad*" was actually compiled by his son Abd Allah from his lectures and was amplified by supplements (zawa'id). It consists of 28,000 – 29,000 traditions. The Musnad we have Ibn Hanbal's ***Kitab al-Salat wma Yalzam Fiha***, on the discipline at prayer-Ibn Hanbal, written in prison is frequently quoted in works of Hanbalite dogmatists; *al-radd ala'l-zamadika wa'l-jahmiyya fima Shakkat fihi min mutashabih al-Qur'an*, in which he refutes the *Tawil*—explanation introduced by the Mutazilite likewise a book entitled *Kitab Taat al-Rasul* is quoted, in it he discusses the line one must follow in those cases where the Ahadith seems to be in contradiction with the text of certain Quranic passage.

The Ahl-e-Hadith (people of the traditions) appear to have developed out of a pious reaction to the assassination of Caliph Yazid bin Walid (d.744). Prior Yazid's assassination, scholars who emphasized Hadith (traditions of the prophet Muhammad) as the primary source for interpreting the will of Allah were disorganized and fairly removed from the widespread emphasis on applying varying levels of reason to the Qur'an. Yazid 's assassination was interpreted by more conservative groups as a revolution against the predestined plan of Allah. After the Abbasid revolution (c.720-750), the Ahl-e-Hadith (salafi) developed into the main group opposed to the dominance of the rationalist theology of the Mutazilite. During the religious inquisition or Mihna (833-850) many of the Ahl-e-hadith were imprisoned for refusing to agree to the doctrine of the created Qur'an. Members of the Ahl-e-hadith , such as Ahmad Ibn Hanbal(d.855), became important religious and social leader due to their refusal to recant their beliefs in the eternal nature of the Qur'an. After the Mihna, the Ahl-e-Hadith led an anti-rationalist movement that forced advocates of rationalist thought underground. The Ahl-e-Hadith formed a school of legal thought named after Ahmad Ibn Hanbal that continued to pursue legal methods that focused less on uses of reason end more on tradition. The contemporary influence of Ahl-e-Hadith ideology continues to be important for a number of diverse groups.

The Ahl-e-hadith, literally the “*people of tradition*”, is not a distinct group of thinkers, but refers variously to the Hanbali jurists, and or to those who see themselves as particularly enthusiastic about the prophetic traditions (hadith reports) in Islam. Hanbali *Fuqaha'* (jurists of Islamic law) is expected to master the Hadith Collections, to be experts in judging their varying levels of reliability and in using them to resolve legal issues. The different legal schools in Islam take different attitude toward the hadith reports. For some time it has lost its direct link with the Hanbalis, and has become shorthand for a commitment to tradition, where this means an attempt at returning to the rules and way of life of the salaf, the original leaders of the Ummah, the Islamic community. On the other hand, the Hanbali School does embody a particularly enthusiastic commitment to the Ahadith in its definition and justification of legal validity. It sees other schools as not being appropriately committed to them and as excessively privileging the *ra'y* (personal opinion) of jurists. Those who emphasize the significance of tradition set themselves up as the Ahl-e-Hadith against the *Ahl-al-ra'y* (people of opinion).

In the ninth century (3rd century A.H.) the Abbasid leader in Baghdad directly attacked the Ahl-e-Hadith for their theory that the Qur'ān was uncreated. The Caliph al-Ma'mun insisted that the community support the view that the Qur'ān was created, a view than propounded by the Mu'tazila. This view was later on reversed and the Ahl-e-Hadith (Salafi) became the new orthodoxy, a condition in which they persisted for many centuries in the Sunni world. Ibn – Nadeem in his Fihrist used the expression Ahl-e-Hadith to replace the more common Ahl-al-Sunnah, perhaps as a result of his shii sympathies on the other hand, those with in the Islamic world who argue for a new approach to longstanding issues criticized the Ahl-e-Hadith as a group of reactionary thinkers, and as people often aligned with radical and violent groups.

Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyyah movement of India founded by Syed Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed was started as a religious reform movement about C.E. 1818, it took a political turn within a few years and spread throughout Indo-Pakistan subcontinent with extraordinary rapidity. In course of time, it also split up into three distinct groups, namely the Patna school, *Ta'ayuni and the Ahl-e-Hadith.*”

Muin uddin Ahmad (the author Faraizi Movement) further states ; “on the whole, the Faraizi and the Ahl -e-Hadith appear to have been largely indifferent to each other.....Although the Faraizi are followers of the Hanafi School of law, they do not oppose the idea of following prophetic traditions. The Ahl-e-Hadith does not appear to have come into direct conflict with the *Faraizi.*” Besides, writers have identified Ahl-e-Hadith with three main principles: They place emphasis on the principle of *Taw hid* (unity of Allah); they believe in direct *ijtihad* (in the light of Qur'ān and the Sunnah), accepted the four main Sunni schools of law in the light of Qur'ān and Sunnah. They want to eradicate from the society all un-Islamic customs and traditions. Writers and chroniclers have reported different titles for the Nawab in regard to his works, views and contributions, some of them called him leader of the Ahl-e-Hadith in the nineteenth century India; others gave him the name of Wahhabi; and there were some whose historical assessment can be interpreted as describing him the successor of Haji Shariat Allah's Faraizi movement in Bengal. The real nature of the above differing remarks about the Nawab and Ahl-e-Hadith and whether it were the Ahl-e-Hadith only who enunciated the above three main principles, or there were some other people too who shared their opinions, we need have a bird's –eye view of the

entire Muslim society; to look for the likely causes responsible for its decadence, and also find out what steps were taken, and who took them, to resuscitate it. The following account would reveal that the factors that brought about Muslim degeneration in India were also responsible for Muslim's loss of power in other parts of the world.

After a brief period, people began to rely mostly on the works of the four *a'immah* Abu Hanifa, Malik Ibn Anas, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, and Imam Shafii. Many factors in various parts of the world provided opportunities for these four schools to flourish. The outcome of these tragic issue to confine religious ideas to only four schools- was a complete check on the intellectual growth of the Muslim ummah. Muslim never remained in any era without some appropriate, guidance which came through people like Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328 C.E.), Ibn Hajar al Asqalani, Suyuti, Shah Wali Allah (1703-1762 C.E.) and his son's ,Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792 C.E.), Muhammad Ibn Ali al- Shawkani, Syed Ahmad Shaheed (1786-1831 C.E.), Muhammad Abduh and many others. They attempted, in one way or another, to reform the Socio-religious, political, economic and educational systems of the Muslims and performed their duties as best as they could. In the light of this background, we can establish the fact, with an ample evidence, that the reforms introduced by Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab al Najdi, Haji Shari at Allah, Syed Ahmad Shaheed, Shah Ismail Shaheed, Syed Nazir Hussain Baltawi and Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan were not a novelty- these were part of the Tajdid-i- Deen (renovation of din) procedure which the Prophet (peace be upon him) of Islam enunciated more than 1400 years ago. Ahl-e- Hadith, Faraizi and the followers of *Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyyah*, were once termed as "Wahhabi," "traitors" and "religious fanatics" and were executed on these bases by Ranjit Singh and the British Government.

Faraizi means one who emphasizes the practice of the five pillars of Islam, i.e. Tawhid (belief in the unity of Allah), Namaz (prayer), Roza (fasting), Zakat (poor rates/legal alms) and Pilgrimage to Makkah. Ahl-e-Hadith means those who place emphasis on the unity of Allah, fight against sinful innovations.

Ulama-e-Ahl-e-Hadith the reassertion of the unity (Tawhid) of Allah, and a denial of occult power, and knowledge of the hidden things (ilm-ul-ghayb) to any of his creatures. They

attacked on the belief in saint worship, which has been so commonly adopted throughout India. They rejected to follow blindly to the four recognized schools of canon law, and instructed to follow the Qur'ān and traditions, as accepted by the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), are the only worthy guide for true Muslims. They reject the common notion that taqlid of the founders of these four schools are of final authority. Ulama-e-Ahl-e-Hadith accepted the four Sunni Schools in the light of Qur'an and Hadith. It is wrong to say that Ulama-e-Ahl-e-Hadith outrightly rejected the four Sunni Schools of Thought rather they say there is no question of rejection of any fatwa or Qiyas if it is based in the light of Qur'ān and authentic Aahdaith. Ulama-e-Ahl-e-Hadith rejected of following any particular Imam and say our Imam is Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Ibn Taymiyyah 's main intention was to follow the Qur'ān and Ahadith "*to describe Allah only as He has described Himself, in His Book and as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has described Him in the Sunnah*". His doctrine was centred on and inspired by the spirit of Hanbalism, a doctrine of synthesis or of conciliation "*the happy mean*" (*wasat*), which would accord to each School its rightful place in a strongly hierarchical whole in conformity with the precepts of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. "*The dogmatic theologians*", "*based their system on reason (aql), the traditionist based theirs on hadith (nakl), and the Sufis theirs on free-will (irada)*"

The Muwahhidūn (Unitarians) strongly disagreed with their opponents on the question of *Tawassul* (intercession). For Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahab, *Ibadah* (worship) refers to all the utterances and actions- inward as well as outward- that Allah desires and commands. The common practice of seeking intercession from dead saints is prohibited, as is excessive devotion at their tombs, the doctrine of intercession led the Muwahhidūn to denounce vehemently the widely followed practice of visitation of tombs and the building of domes near them. Initially Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab had considered visitation, if performed in the true spirit of Islam, a pious and praiseworthy act. However, Muwahhidūn believe that people have transformed the prayers for the dead into prayers to the dead; gravesites became places of assembly for worshipers. The excessive veneration of the deceased who enjoyed a holy reputation was a first step that had led people to idol-worship in the past. To avoid polytheism, they consider it an obligation to destroy all such existing tombs. The Muwahhidūn also believe that mere affiliation

with Islam is not sufficient in itself to prevent a Muslim from becoming a polytheist. The Unitarians developed strict procedures to direct the discussion of doctrinal issues. To judge religious questions, they first search the texts of the *Qur'an* and the *Ahadiths* and define their views accordingly. If reference is not found in these texts, they look for the consensus of the “*virtuous ancestors*”, particularly the companions and their successors; *Ijma*, however, is restricted to those who follow the *Qur'an* and the traditions.

When it is evident that worship is due to Allah alone, then to associate anyone in that worship is shirk. Shirk is evil, no matter what the object is, it may be ‘*King of Prophet*, or Sufi Saint or tree or tomb. It is also shirk to seek refuge with anyone other than Allah.¹ To call and seek help from other than Allah is defined by Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab as ‘*Grave Shirk*’ (*Shirk al-Akbar*). Ibn wahab further says that no one is more misguided than the one who calls other than Allah and the person called will have enmity with the caller on the day of judgement. Abdul Wahab defines hypocrisy as a ‘*Small Shirk*’ (*Shirk al-Asghar*) and says that the pious men are more prone to hypocrisy. A hypocrite, he says, is one who ostensibly prays for the sake of God but his real motive is to show piety.

In the nineteenth century there was a remarkable revival of the Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab and religion in *Bengal*, and several sects that owe their origin to the influence of the Muwahhidūn reformation, have sent their missionaries through the province purging out the of non-Muslim superstitions, awakening religious awareness and spreading the faith among unbelievers.

The basic book of Ahadith and Fiqh is *Muwatta* by Imam Malik whereas all other authentic Collection of Ahadith represents its amplification. The editors of the six authentic Collections of Hadith and Hakim have tried their level best to present Imam Malik’s *Marasil as Mausal and his Mauquf as Marfu’*. In other words, all these Collections are at best commentaries upon Malik’s main work. The chapters on Fiqh in *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Daud*, *Sunan Nasai*, *Sahih Bukhari* and *Jami Tirmizi* represent an extension of the points made by Imam Malik.

Islam quickly spread in many parts of the world and the Islamic empire included in its orbit men of various tribes and nationalities. It spread in Western Central Asia, Africa, Spain, India and other parts of the world; it is sometimes supposed that the spread of Islam in India was due to force employed by the conquerors. This view is not correct for there are no instances in history of whole sole persecutions of non-Muslims. A study of Islam in India in the eighteenth century is inextricably entwined with two strands, both of which were of primary importance. Great controversies, ideological and sectarian, whether over pantheism or Imamate, that shook other parts of the Islamic world, in due course, extended to India. On the other hand the entire question of co-existence of Islam with Hinduism presented a unique feature hardly paralleled in any other part of the world. Islam in India was particularly affected by successive waves of ideas and practices of Sufi thought from the Islamic world. The early Sufi Saints who came to India and permanently settled here had lived with the common people and propagated the laws of Islam and tied it had flourished invite them to embrace Islam. It is largely due to their missionary zeal that Islam in the early centuries in India had flourished.

It is true to say that since 13th century C.E. Sufis started organizing themselves into various orders like Chishtiyah, Suhrawrdiyah, Qadiriyyah and Naqshbandiyah etc. **Ahl-e-Hadith Movement is an extension for Islamic revivalism and the main Slogan is back to the Qur'an and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him).**

The Thesis contents seven chapters, excluding introduction and conclusion. Brief summary accounts of all chapters are given below.

Chapter 1, “An Introduction to the Early Phase of the Development of Islam: *Ahl-e-Hadith Perspective*”

This chapter highlights the following:

- i) The early development of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula and the teachings of Islam, and its significance;
- ii) The establishment of Islamic state and early development and compilation of Hadith literature;
- iii) Regarding the *Sihah Sittah* and Imams ;

iv) Development of different Schools of Thought in Islam.

Chapter 2, “Some Prominent *Ulama* of the Muslim World and their Doctrines: *Ahl-e-Hadith* Perspective”

The chapter second deals with:

- i) The ancestral particulars and background of *Salafi Ulama* of the Muslim world and their life, works, services as teachers, writers and preachers.
- ii) Contribution of *Salafi Ulama* in the establishment of the *Salafi* movement all over the world.
- iii) The influence of *Salafi Ulama* on the *Ahl-e-Hadith* movement of India and the Sub-continent.
- iv) Some prominent *Salafi Ulama* are: Imam Abu Hanifa(RA) (80-150 A.H.), Imam Malik (RA) (713-795 CE) ; Imam Shafii (RA) (767-795 CE); Imam Ibn Hanbal (RA) (780-855 C.E); Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) (1263-1328); Ibn Qayyim (RA) (1292–1350) Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab (RA) (1703-1792) and many others.

Chapter 3, “The Advent and Spread of Islam in India”

Chapter three critically examines the following:

- i) The historical background of the arrival of Muslims in India.
- ii) The Arab conquest of Sind and other parts of India.
- iii) The role of Muslim traders and Sufi Saints for the spread of Islam in India.

Chapter 4, “Socio-Religious Conditions of the Muslims since the Advent of Islam in India”

Chapter four focuses on the Socio-Religious beliefs of some of the Muslims in India. This chapter emphasised that it is due to non-Muslim cultural assimilation and

amalgamation many Muslims adopted un-Islamic beliefs and practices. I have discussed in detail all un-Islamic beliefs and practices categorically.

Chapter 5, “THE ORIGIN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT OF AHL-E-HADITH MOVEMENT ON CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM SOCIETY IN INDIA”

Chapter five critically analyses the origin development and Impact of Ahl-e-Hadith movement on contemporary Muslim Society in India:

1. The origin and development of Ahl-e-Hadith movement in India
Some important Indian Ulama, Ahl-e-Hadith prospective
2. Maulana Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi (1551-1642 CE),
3. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1562-1624 CE),
4. Shah Wali Allah (1703-1762 CE),
5. Shah Abdul Aziz (1749-1824 CE),
6. Shah Ismail Shaheed (1779-1831 CE),
7. Syed Ahmad Shaheed (1786-1831CE),
8. Haji Shariat Ullah (1781–1840 CE),
9. Nesar Ali Titu Mir (1782 – 1831 CE),
10. Syed Nazir Hussain Baltawi (1805- 1902),
11. Dudu Mia (1819-1862 CE),
12. Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan (1832-1890 CE),
13. Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari (1868-1948 CE),
14. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1957 CE),
15. Maulana Abdu Rauf Jhandanagri (1910-1999 CE),
16. And many other Ulama-e-Ahl-e-Hadith.

According to Jamiat-e-Ahl-e-Hadith the above Indian Ulama rejected *Taqlid* and propagated the true spirit of Islam and emphasised to study Qur’ān and Hadith. The teachings and their works made Impact on Indian Muslim Society, as they tried their best reject shirk and bid’at from the Indian Muslim Society in particular and others in general.

Chapter 6, “Establishment of Prominent *Ahl-e-Hadith* Madrasas in India and their Impact on the Muslim Society”

Chapter six is on the establishment of various important *Ahl-e-Hadith* Madrasas in India are as follows:

- (i) Jamia Salafia Banaras, its infrastructure, faculty, syllabus;
- (ii) Dar-ul-Hadith Rehmania (Delhi) and its curriculum;
- (iii) Jamia Islamia Salafia (Assam);
- (iv) Al- Jamiatul- Salafia (Mewat, UP);
- (v) Jamia Dar-ul-al-Huda (Yusuf Pur);
- (vi) Jamia Rehmania (Monghyr, Bihar);
- (vii) Darul-Ulum Ahmadiyya Salafiyya (Laheria Sarai);
- (viii) Darussalam (Oomerabad, Tamil Nadu);
- (ix) Jamia Muhammadiyyah Arabiya (Raidurg, MH);
- (x) Darul-ul-Ulum Ahmadiya Salafi (Darbhanga, Bihar);
- (xi) And many others.

This chapter also highlights in a detailed manner various rules and regulations for the admission in various courses, of residing, and curriculum etc. in these Madrasas. The above Madarsas and many others Ahl-e-Hadith Madarsas played an important role for the to Islamic education and over all development of the Muslim Society in India.

Chapter 7: “THE AHL-E-HADITH AND OTHER MUSLIM SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT (Doctrinal Divisions) AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE MUSLIM SOCIETY IN INDIA”

This chapter finally examined the Ahl-e-Hadith and other Muslim schools of Thought (Doctrinal Divisions) and their Impact on the Muslim society in India.

- 1) *Ahl-e-Hadith* doctrines vs

- 2) Hanafi School of Thought.
- 3) Maliki School of Thought.
- 4) Shafii School of Thought.
- 5) Hanbali School of Thought.
- 6) Deobandi School of Thought.
- 7) Barelwi School of Thought
- 8) Shia School of Thought.

Conclusion: conclusive phase of the thesis.

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I hope and trust this thesis makes a substantive and original contribution to a study on *Impact of the Ahl-e-Hadith movement on Contemporary Muslim Society in India.*

Naghma

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INTRODUCTION

Ahl-e-Hadīth

The term Ahl-e-Hadīth ‘literally means ‘People of the Hadīth, signifying the claim of this group to be the strict followers of the Prophet’s (peace be on him), Sunnah or practice, as reflected in the Hadīth (tradition of the Prophet). In addition to the term Ahl-e-Hadīth, they refer themselves, as do the Saudi ‘Muwahhidūn’ (the Unitarians), as Salafīs, or those who follow the Salafī-e-Sāliḥ or the ‘pious predecessors’.

Ahl-e-Hadīth Movement in India

Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth traced the origin of the movement from the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), the Khulafā-e-Rāshidūn, Sahāba, the four Sunni Imams/Jurists (in the light of the Qur’ān and Sunnah) and Sunni Mujtahidun (the followers of Qur’ān and Sunnah). In India scholars are of the opinion that this movement is an off-shoot of Waliullah Movement and the Tariqah-e-Muhammadiyyah movement of Sayyid Aḥmad Shāhīd and Shāh Ismā‘il Shahid. Therefore, to understand the rise of the movement in a proper perspective, it becomes here incumbent to provide a briefing of Shāh Waliullah and his thought.

In the eighteenth century, the Indo-Pak subcontinent witnessed two important processes: the decline of the Mughal Empire, which may conveniently be dated from the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, and the beginning of an intellectual and political re-awakening that signalled Shāh Waliullah (1703-1764 C.E.), and laid the foundations for a Muslim resistance against British rule in India. The first process, the fall of the Mughal Empire and its causes, is not a concern here. However the significant part for discussion here is the second process: the beginning of the intellectual and political re-awakening, an event to which the works of Muhammad Ṣiddīq Hasan Khān, Nawab of Bhopal, are closely related. His works were an attempt from an important angle towards the re-awakening of Muslims on an international level. In order to assess the importance of his life and works in their historical perspective, a brief account of the Indian context in which Shāh Waliullah worked will be given. This will be followed by a short description of the activities of Muhammad Ṣiddīq Hasan Khān and his followers.

It was the time when Muslims on the whole were indifferent towards their religion. They drifted away from their religious institutions and clung instead to time-honoured customs and traditions. Caste differences and social discrimination, which were characteristics of Hindu society, found their way into the Muslim social order. The Hindus, according to the Muslim point of view, worshipped their idols in the temples; the Muslims, on the other hand, started showing undue respect to their *Pirs* and Sufi Saints. They gave charity and devotion in their names, hoping that they would grant their requests. They strongly believed that these *Pirs* and Sufi Saints, living or dead, were capable of helping them in adversity. Blind faith (*Taqlīd*) was the order of the day. The *Fatāwā* (religious decrees) of the so-called '*Ulamā'* (religious scholars) had replaced the tenets of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*. These *Fatāwā* were considered to have the binding force of the commands of God and His Apostle. Anyone who did not follow one of the four schools of jurisprudence (or *A'immah*), viz. Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (d.150/767), Imām Mālik (d.179/795), Imām Shāfi'ī (d. 204/819), and Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/ 855), was considered to be no more within the pale of Islam. Sectarianism was also very common. Religious rivalries and squabbles were prevalent among the followers of the four *A'immah* and between the Sunni and Shia who blinded their reason. These activities exhausted the energies and capabilities of Scholars without yielding any useful outcome; on the contrary, they were damaging the common interests of the people. Social conditions were even worse. Widow Remarriage was thought to be immodest-another Hindu influence. Lavish spending on ceremonies on the eve of wedding, funerals, marriages and circumcision was thought being honourable, and Muslims borrowed and got into debt to maintain ceremonial pomp. Islam favours simple celebrations on these occasions, but long association with Hindus made these ceremonies more and more complicated.

Being a gifted man, Shāh Waliullah realised the weaknesses and deficiencies of the Muslim community and determined to rectify it. After a thorough study of the situation he diagnosed that following underlying factors were responsible for the decadence of the Muslim community: firstly, indifference towards religious institutions and lack of concern for the study of the *Qur'ān* and its understanding; secondly, economic imbalance; and finally, lack of impressive, dynamic and reliable leadership.

Shāh Waliullah first tried to reform the current belief of the people that the Qur’ān could not be translated into another language and to alter their attitude towards the Qur’ān, which they had confined to recitation, regarding it good for curing physical rather than spiritual diseases and for removing of evil spirits from children. He knew that the main cause of Muslim decadence throughout the world was their complete ignorance of the meanings of the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān, the Will of God, was intended to be properly understood and applied in various aspects of individual life, but being in Arabic the people were not familiar with it. Shāh Waliullah, thus embarked upon the urgent but controversial and dangerous task of rendering the Qur’ān into a language which the ‘‘Ulamā’’ generally spoke and understood. Therefore, he selected Persian- the only language which could serve the purpose- and rendered the Qur’ān into it. It was a clear break with the long and persistent belief of the people, but he convinced them about its necessity, and so it was welcomed. His Persian rendering was followed by an interlineal Urdu rendering by his son, Shāh Abdul Qādir, which proved a further great help in the understanding of the meanings of the Qur’ān, and on which Nawāb Ṣiddīq Hasan Khān later on based his own exegesis called *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān*.

Secondly, Shāh Waliullah explained to the people that *Ijtihad* (independent judgement in a legal or theological question, based on the interpretation of the four *Usūl*) was necessary throughout the ages and that Islam could not be confined merely to the pronouncement of the four Schools (of jurisprudence). He gave due importance to the contributions of the four *A’imma*, but added that the necessity of *Ijtihad* has been and would be realised throughout the history of the Islam because the problems of the people have been increased with the passing of time, and, if the processes of *Ijtihad* were to be confined to the eras of the four *A’imma*, it would prevent Islam providing a complete code of conduct for life.

Thirdly, Shāh Waliullah argued that the necessary qualifications for the practitioners of *Ijtihad* were a sound knowledge of the Qur’ān, Ḥadīth, Nāsikh wa Mansūkh (abrogated and abrogating verses of the Qur’ān), the decisions and analogies derived by the previous *Mujtahidūn* (interpreters of the law), and of the Arabic language. He believed in the dynamic nature of Islam and its capability for guiding people in all eras and in all circumstance, but warned the ‘Ulamā’ that if they did not change their stubborn attitude in favour of the inevitability of *Ijtihad*, its

consequences would be disastrous. Describing the attitude of the ‘*Ulamā*’ who went beyond the genuine limits of *Taqlīd* (accepting binding as final authority, the opinion of a particular Imām/Jurist), Shāh Waliullah said that they persistently accepted and preserved the decisions and interpretations of past *Mujtahidūn* who were men like themselves and liable to err, and considered their *Fatāwa* as undisputed and authentic code of conduct. This made them ignore the Qur’ān and the Ḥadīth and lay at the root of their intellectual stagnation.

Shāh Waliullah also attacked the false belief of Muslims in *Pirs* and Sufi Saints. He explained to them that it was sheer ignorance and folly to call on *Pirs* and Sufi Saints for help, or to go to their tombs and show them undue respect. He said that this kind of reverence shown to the tombs of *Pirs* and saints was equivalent to the acts of *shirk* (polytheism), which Islam came to extinguish. Shah Waliullah also made a shrewd analysis of the causes of economic deterioration which had brought about the decadence of Muslims in India. He said that two things were largely responsible for the instability of the Muslim society: the dependence of a large number of people on the state treasury, without contributing anything in return and, secondly, the exorbitant taxation on the public which they could not afford and which led to revolts against the rulers. Unless these economic ills could be alleviated, society would not lie in peace. Food, clothes, shelter, and rising a family were the basic requirements of life, and without proper provision of these necessities, stability in society is impossible.

Referring to the luxurious life of the rulers, Shāh Waliullah warned that when the ruling class indulges in extravagance and pleasure, society suffers, and administration deteriorates, and the people have to pay the price. The consequences must be chaos and disorder, deterioration of fundamental values, and national demoralisation. At this stage, people lose their independence and the yoke of subjection is put on their shoulders.

Shah Waliullah also emphasised the need for the rulers to respect all professions and to allow the people to adopt professions according to their choice. A barber, Shāh Waliullah argues, is as important and necessary as a shoemaker, or a weaver. He condemned those who favoured class or professional discrimination in society, but suggested agriculture, the backbone of society, should be given top priority over other

callings. “The ratio between agriculture and other professions should be like that of flour and salt,” he wrote. Even this cursory account shows how Shāh Waliullah concerned himself with the entire structure of Muslim political, social, economic and religious institutions in India, and as such, his importance to the history of Muslim revivalism is unquestioned.

Although Shāh Walīullah did not succeed in arresting the decline of Muslim power, yet his fresh and dynamic ideas had a vast impact on Muslim history. After his death in 1764, his mission was carried on by his sons ‘Abdul ‘Azīz (d. 1827), Shāh Rafī al-Dīn (d. 1833), Shāh ‘Abd al-Qādir (d. 1826), and Shāh ‘Abdul Ghānī. They all were noted scholars of their times and each of them tried his best to convey to the Indian Muslims message of their father in the simplest possible manner- arranging special groups for the specific purpose of preaching, and writing many books in local languages of the general public.

This reformation movement then took another course- Shāh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz issued a *fatwā*, declaring India as *Dar al-Harb* (State of War) and proclaimed a Jihād, against all those who occupied Muslim cities, obligatory on all Indian Muslims. He was constantly on the lookout for a man of outstanding character who could fight against the current non-Islamic customs on the one hand, and lead Jihād against the occupants of the Muslim cities on the other. He found this man in the person of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd.

Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd was born in his ancestral home Daira Shāh ‘Alam Ullah (now Known as Takia), a village of Rai-Bareli (U.P., India) in 1786. By temperament not a scholar, he made his way to Lucknow in pursuit of employment; he succeeded in finding a post with Amir Khān, who afterwards became the Nawāb of Tonk and supporter of Sayyid Aḥmad’s movement. After some time, he lost interest in this post and resigned. By now he seemed to have developed a taste for learning, so he left for Delhi, which was the centre of learning and the residence of the family of Shāh Waliullah. From Delhi, Shāh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz sent him to Akbarabad, where his brother Shāh ‘Abdul Qādir was lecturing. There he read the Qur’ān and grammar, but did not make much progress with his studies. He was now inclined towards Tasawwuf and, so, he became the pupil of Shāh ‘Abdul Azīz in the *Naqashbandī Tariqah* of Tasawwuf.

Sayyid Ahmād started a comprehensive programme of preaching throughout India. Mawlānā Muḥammad Ismā‘īl (d. 1831) and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Ḥay (d. 1827), the pupil and son in law of Shāh ‘Abdul Azīz, joined him in this task. They travelled over a large part of India- Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Rampur, Bareli, Shahjahanabad, Banaras and Lucknow- and explained to the people the harmful consequences of spending recklessly on ceremonies. To show to the people that widow remarriage was not a heinous act, as it was considered to be, Sayyid Ahmād himself married a widow. Their insistence was mainly on such things as the unity of Allah, honesty, truthfulness and futility of showing undue respect to *Pirs* and saints. These teachings were compiled by Muḥammad Ismā‘īl Shāhīd and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Ḥay into book form under the title *Sirāt-i-Mustaqīm*.

During his Rampur journey, Sayyid Ahmād met some Afghanis, who told him about the cruel treatment of Muslims by the Sikhs, and invited him to liberate them from these brutalities. In response to this invitation, he determined to initiate Jihād against the Sikhs on the North West Frontier (the Present Peshawar and Malakand Divisions). Before starting the Jihād Sayyid Ahmād went on a Pilgrimage to Makkah in 1822. His book *Sirāt-i-Mustaqīm* was circulated among the pilgrims and greatly appreciated by them. This controverts the opinion of those who say that Sayyid Ahmād imbibed the doctrines of Muwahhidūn or Unitarians during this journey and his future activities in India owe their momentum to them.

After returning to India he started preparations for the Jihād. He sent Maulana Muḥammad Ismā‘īl and Maulānā ‘Abdul Ḥay to various parts of India to convince the people about the legality and necessity of the Jihād. This message of the Jihād was so widely spread that it became a main topic and discussion throughout India. In 1826 he and his 7000 *Mujāhidūn* (warriors) set out on the Jihād. As he could not pass his force through the Punjab, a Sikh controlled area, he first went to Afghanistan and from there to Peshawar through the Khyber Pass.

The first battle against the Sikhs was fought at Akora in 1826 and resulted in the Sikhs' defeat. The second attack was made at Hadro a village on the east of the Indus River, and the Sikh army was defeated again. These skirmishes went on till the *Mujāhid* forces were defeated at Balakot in 1831 C.E., (Hazara, West Pakistan) and

Sayyid Ahmād and Maulana Muḥammad Ismā’īl were slain by the forces of Ranjit Singh and Sher Singh.

After his death, the East India Company began to take this movement seriously. Sayyid Ahmād’s mission was carried on by his followers. Patna, Sitana and Sadiqpur were its main centres. It was by now an organised movement and had a number of bases in all parts of India where volunteers were trained to raise funds for the Jihād, and to preach to the people including the police and the soldiers.

Beside the reform movement of Shāh Waliullah, a contemporary reform movement had also been started in Arabia under the leadership of Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb al-Najdī (d. 1703) in reaction to the contemporary Muslim society which, under Ottoman rule, was suffering from the same symptoms as those of India. He, therefore, placed great emphasis on the unity of God, a principle that stresses the unity of action and purpose, both essential for the establishment of a dynamic social order; the absurdity of showing undue respect to saints and *Pirs*, and tombs; return for guidance to the Qur’ān and the Sunnah alone; Rejection of the idea of accepting as a final authority the interpretations of a particular Imām (legal interpreter of the Sharī‘ah); the significance of *Ijtihād*; and the evil consequence of following customary rules and regulation. He did not even hesitate to use force to impose his reformist ideas, in which he succeeded up to a certain extent; but, as he was rigid and tactless, imposing his ideas by the use of force, his movement did not achieve its goal.

‘Abdul Wahhāb was followed by another Yemeni scholar, Muḥammad Ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī (d.1834), the follower of Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328), the follower of Imām Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 855). Just as ‘Abdul Wahhāb had done, he attacked *Taqlīd* (imitation of the Jurists), by writing a book, *Al-Qawal al-Mufid Fī Ḥukum al-Taqlīd*, which created a great stir among his contemporary scholars. His other important contribution in this connection was *Nayl al-Awtār*, a commentary on Ibn Taymiyyah’s *Al-Muntaqa al-Akhbār*, a voluminous work, which provides rules and regulations on the problems of Fiqh, based on the authentic Ḥadīth of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Describing the importance of *Al-Muntaqa al-Akhbār*, and what prompted him to write this commentary, he pointed out, that it ‘has become a source-book for majority of the ‘Ulamā’ when they are in need of finding a legal proof-especially in this region and in these times; upon this sweet spring, the eyes of original thinkers collide with

one another and the steps of investigators vie with one another in entering its gates. It has thus become a resort for thinkers whither they repair and a heaven for those who wish to flee from the bonds of slavish and blind acceptance of authority.” However, he was rather more rational and tactful than some of the reformers, and his works achieved wide circulation and acceptance among literary circles. Moreover, communication by sea by that time had improved considerably, and with it social intercourse between the ‘Ulamā’ and scholars of India, Yemen and Makkah increased as well. And it was possibly because of this growing contact that during 1860’s ‘Ulamā’, full of the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah and Shawkani, were found in the courts of the Indian princely states, especially Hyderabad and Bhopal. These scholars introduced the ideas and works of Shawkani and, indirectly, of Ibn Taymiyyah in Bhopal. They gradually spread throughout India.

This was the context in which Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān was born. His birthplace was Bareli, the village of his maternal grandfather, a village that gave birth to Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, the champion of the Jihād movement. His father, Sayyid Awlād Ḥasan Khān, was a strong supporter of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, and accompanied him in his journey to Afghanistan and rendered great services to the cause of Islam.

After the death of his father in 1837, he remained under the care of his mother. When he grew up, he made several journeys to the surrounding districts and met a great number of his father’s friends there. On his return to Kanauj he went to Delhi and remained under the tutorship of Ṣadr al-Dīn Khān, the *Muftī* of Delhi. After sixteen months he came back to Kanauj and decided to go to Bhopal in search of employment on his arrival, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Khān, the prime minister of Bhopal and a supporter of the Jihād movement, recruited him as one of his personal bodyguards. But, soon after, he was relieved of his duties, owing to his alleged involvement in religious debates of an inflammatory nature.

From Bhopal he went to Tonk, where he stayed with the relatives of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and worked for eight months as an employee of the Ṣiddīq Ḥasan of Tonk, a strong supporter of the Jihād movement. Once again Jamāl al-Dīn Khān persuaded the Begum to invite him to Bhopal. She assigned him with the duty of writing the history of Bhopal.

Up to this time he was under the influence of the teachings of Shāh Waliullah and Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd. On his arrival in Bhopal, he came into contact with the ‘Ulamā’ from Yemen in the royal court of Bhopal and studied under their supervision the works of Ibn Taymiyyah and Shawkānī. These scholars being imbued with the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah and Shawkānī, immensely impressed him and, in a few years’ time, fundamentally changed his outlook. His outlook experienced further changes when, in 1869, on his way to Makkah, he read other works of these authors in Hudaydah, Yemen, and Makkah. After his return to Bhopal, he was no more a *Muqallid*; on the contrary, he started writing books against *Taqlīd* and the followers of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa who, according to him, were chiefly responsible for the intellectual stagnation of Muslim India. He followed, with certain reservations, Ibn Taymiyyah, Shāh Waliullah and Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb and Shawkānī in his criticism on *Taqlīd*, non-Islamic customs and traditions (*Bid‘ah*) and in his emphasis on the revival of the institution of *Ijtihād* and returning to the guidance from the Qur’ān and the Sunnah alone.

The on-going work on the “Impact of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Movement on Contemporary Muslim Society in India” is based upon the following scheme:

Introduction: The Introduction discusses the scope and Socio-Religious importance of my work.

Chapter 1: “An Introduction to the Early Phase of the Development of Islam: *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Perspective”

This chapter highlights the following:

- i) The early development of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula and the teachings of Islam, and its significance;
- ii) The establishment of Islamic state and early development and compilation of Hadīth literature;
- iii) Regarding the *Ṣiḥāḥ-i Sittah* and Imāms (Jurists) ;
- iv) Development of different Schools of Thought in Islam.

Chapter 2: “Some Prominent ‘Ulamā’ of the Muslim World and their Doctrines: *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Perspective”

The chapter second deals with:

- i) The ancestral particulars and background of *Salafī ‘Ulamā* of the Muslim world and their life, works, services as teachers, writers and preachers.
- ii) Contribution of *Salafī ‘Ulamā* in the establishment of the *Salafī* movement all over the world.
- iii) The influence of *Salafī ‘Ulamā* on the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* movement of India and the Sub-continent.
- iv) Some prominent *Salafī ‘Ulamā* are: Imām Mālik (713-795 CE); Imām Shāfi‘ī (767-795 CE); Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (780-855 C.E); Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328); Ibn Qayyim (1292–1350) Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb (1703-1792) and many others.

Chapter 3: “The Advent and Spread of Islam in India”

Chapter three critically examines the following:

- i) The historical background of the arrival of Muslims in India.
- ii) The Arab conquest of Sind and other parts of India.
- iii) The role of Sufi Saints in the spread of Islam in India.

Chapter 4: “Socio-Religious Conditions of the Muslims since the Advent of Islam in India”

Chapter four focuses on the Socio-Religious beliefs of some of the Muslims in India. This chapter emphasises that it is due to non-Muslim cultural assimilation and amalgamation many Muslims adopted un-Islamic beliefs and practices. All such un-Islamic beliefs and practices categorically have been discussed in detail.

Chapter 5: “The Origin Development and Impact of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Movement on Contemporary Muslim Society in India”

Chapter five critically analyses the teachings and doctrines of the following:

1. The origin and development of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* movement in India. Some important Indian ‘Ulamā: *Ahl-e-Hadīth* prospective.
2. Maulanā ‘Abdul Haq Muḥaddith Dehlawī (1551-1642 CE),
3. Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (1562-1624 CE),

4. Shāh Waliullah (1703-1762 CE),
5. Shāh Abdul ‘Azīz (1749-1824 CE),
Tarīqah-i-Muhammadīyyah/ Ahl-e-Hadīth / Farā’idī ‘Ulamā:
6. Shāh Ismā‘īl Shāhīd (1779-1831 C.E),
7. Sayyid Ahmad Shāhīd (1786-1831CE),
8. Ḥājī Sharī‘atullah (1781–1840 CE),
9. Dudū Miyān (1819-1862 CE),
10. Nithār ‘Alī alias Titū Mīr (1782 – 1831 CE),
11. And many other ‘Ulamā’ -e-Ahl-e-Hadīth.

Chapter five also critically examines the following:

- 1) The Origin of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Movement in India
- 2) Some prominent *Ahl-e-Hadīth* ‘Ulamā’ of India are as follows:
 - a) Sayyid Nazīr Husayn Baltawi (1805- 1902 CE)
 - b) Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan (1832-1890)
 - c) Maulanā Sana’ullah Amritsarī (1868-1948 CE)
 - d) Maulanā ‘Abul Kalām Azād (1888-1957 CE)
 - e) Maulanā ‘Abdul Raūf Jhandanagrī (1910-1999 CE)
 - f) And many others ‘Ulamā’ -e-Ahl-e-Hadīth.

According to *Jamī‘at-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth*, the above Indian ‘Ulamā’ rejected *Taqlīd* and propagated the true spirit of Islam and emphasised to study Qur’ān and Hadīth. The teachings and their works made a significant Impact on Indian Muslim Society, as they tried their best to reject *Shirk* and *Bid‘ah* from the Indian Muslim Society in particular and others in general.

Chapter 6: “Establishment of Prominent *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Madrasas in India”
 Chapter six is on the establishment of various important *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Madrasas in India are as follows:

- (i) Jāmi‘a Salafiyya Banaras, its infrastructure, faculty, syllabus
- (ii) Dār-ul-Hadīth Rahmāniyya (Delhi) and its curriculum
- (iii) Jāmi‘a Islāmiyya Salafiyya (Assam)
- (iv) Al- Jāmiyatul- Salafiyya (Mewat, UP)
- (v) Jāmi‘a Dār-ul- Huda (Yusuf Pur)
- (vi) Jāmi‘a Rahmāniyya (Monghyr, Bihar)

- (vii) Dārul- ‘Ulūm Ahmadiyya Salafiyya (Laheria Sarai)
- (viii) Dāruṣṣalām (Oomerabad, Tamil Nadu)
- (ix) Jāmi‘a Muḥammadiyyah Arabiyya (Raidurg, MH)
- (x) Dārul-‘Ulūm Ahmadiyya Salafiyya (Darbhanga, Bihar)
- (xi) And many others.

It also highlights in a detailed manner various rules and regulations for the admission in various courses, of residing, of curriculum etc. in these Madrasas.

Chapter 7: “The *Ahl-e-Hadīth* and Other Muslim Schools of Thought (Doctrinal Divisions) and Their Impact on the Muslim Society in India”

This chapter critically examined the impact of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* movement on the Indian society.

This whole subject-matter is followed by a conclusion that presents a critical assessment and appraisal of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* doctrines and other Sunni Schools and also the Shia School of Thought. Finally, a list of the resource material in the form of books, articles, papers etc. has been provided to mark the culmination of the thesis.

CAPTER- ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EARLY PHASE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM: AHL-E-HADITH PERSPECTIVE

The meaning of Islam

Islam is an Arabic word and denotes submission, surrender and obedience. As a religion, Islam stands for complete submission and obedience to Allah.¹ The word Islam derived from *Aslama* meaning to ‘*resign oneself*’. “The true religion with Allah is Islam” (3:18), The Qur’ān which signify not only peace, salvation, resignation of the will of men to Allah but also a striving after righteousness. Islam is the final form of religion and the Qur’ān is the book of guidance revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him); those who profess the religion of Islam are called Muslims.

Islam is a universal religion and enjoins belief in one Allah, the Angels, the Books of Allah, and all the Prophets and in the day of resurrection. Islam was not a new religion revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but a continuation of the religious principles established by other Prophets of Allah. It is an inclusive religion which contains within itself all religions which went before it. Islam is also a living and potent force in the modern community of nations.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, “He only believes in one Allah , the Angels, the Books of Allah , all the Prophets, the unity of Allah , who believes in the brotherhood of man”. “Islam has welded high and low rich and poor, white and black into one fraternity”. In Islam there is no complex of superiority and inferiority.²

The birth of religion is not a new phenomenon, instead every nation and civilization witnessed a noble messenger from Allah and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been sent down as a blessing and guidance to this Ummah with new code of law known as ‘*Shari’ah*’. The beginning of the seventh century has been justly regarded as the epoch of disintegration—national, social and religious. No period in the history of mankind was as dark as the time when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon) appeared. All the old religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism had lost their authenticity. Although of late appearance, the re-rise of Islam which is simple, robust and vigorous, far surpassed the religions of Syria and Egypt Christian, which were in a stagnating condition and steadily sinking lower and lower into barbarism.³

Faith, Action & Realization

In order to be a true ‘Muslim’ three things are necessary: Faith, Action and realization: faith in Allah and His Prophets action in accordance with that faith, and the realization of one’s relation to Allah as a result of action and obedience. Faith which is described in the Qur’ān, the Holy book of Islam, as Iman consists in believing that Allah alone is worthy of worship and that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is the messenger of Allah, and in bearing witness to the above statement. This implies:⁴

- 1) True existence is that of Allah alone; man and the entire creation exist only because Allah wills them to exist.
- 2) As there cannot be two sources of creation, as Allah alone is the creator, everything comes from Him and goes back to Him; hence the entire creation including man is the manifestation of Allah’s power and glory and hence of His qualities or attributes.
- 3) The relation between man and Allah is that of a servant and the master. As man owes his very existence to Allah, to worship anything else is to commit the gravest of sins.
- 4) The above three aspects of Faith in Allah are realized by man only when he responds to the message of Allah and this is possible when man believes in Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the messenger of Allah .
- 5) As a messenger he is the last and the greatest, about whom all the early messengers have predicted and who thus completes the Process of revelation.
- 6) He is therefore the perfect Ideal for mankind, the perfect servant of Allah and hence the most complete and the ideally balanced manifestation of the attributes of Allah.
- 7) To believe in him is to believe in all the other Prophets of Allah.
- 8) To believe in him is also to believe that the *Qur’ān* contains all the revelations sent to mankind through him, that these revelations provide guidance to us and that we should worship Allah by following these revelations according to the method prescribed for us by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and

hence in accordance with his sayings, doings deeds and tacit approval known as *Sunnah* and *Hadith*.

- 9) To believe in him is also to believe in the carriers of this message, the angels, who are described in the *Qur'ān* as functionaries. Action, described in Arabic by the word *A'māl*, is the manifestation in actuality how far we are true servants of Allah. As action needs rules and regulations according to which we organise our individual and social behaviour, the revelations and the actual physical embodiment of these revelation of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) provide both the basis and the structure of the law of human conduct, known as *Shari'ah*. Besides *Imān* (faith) which provides the central pillar that sustains the whole structure, the five pillars in the five corners are: to make faith in one Allah Prayer, Fasting, *Zakat*, and *Hajj*.⁵

All these five intimately tied up with all other aspects of man's individual and social behaviour. By following them and thereby living a life of complete dedication to the Will of Allah, a man becomes a true Muslim.

Muslim is one whose outlook on life is permeated with this consciousness. He is committed to the values of life given by the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*. He tries to live according to the guidance given by Allah and His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and he strives to promote the message of Islam through his word and action. This striving is known as *Jihad* which means 'striving and a struggle in the path of Allah'. It consists in exerting one's self to the utmost in order to personally follow the teachings of Islam and to work for their establishment in society. *Jihad* has been described in the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah* as the natural corollary of these pillars of Islam (Faith). Commitment to Allah involves commitment to sacrifice one's time, energy and wealth to promote the right cause. It may be necessary at times to give one's life in order to preserve truth. *Jihad* implies readiness to give whatever one has, including his life, for the sake of Allah.⁶

This striving in the path of Allah with *Imān* (faith) as the guiding light and the scheme of '*A'mal* (action) as the system and structure has the following implications:

- 1) Man is accountable to Allah for all that he does. Allah will Judge him on the last day of Judgement and send him either to Heaven, a stage of existence

which leads to further blessings, or to Hell, a stage of suffering and punishment.

- 2) This implies that man's life does not end with his death in this world. He has life after death.
- 3) Therefore all human action should be organised in such manner that he may not suffer in life after death.
- 4) This organization of action in this world implies the organization of all facets of human existence, individual and collective, hence educational, economic, political and social. Shari'ah provides the guidelines, the rules of external conduct.
- 5) This means man is free in his will, choice and action.

Realization of man's relation to Allah is a spiritual aspect known in Arabic as '*ihsān*', which Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explained in the following way: You should worship Allah as if you are seeing Him, for He sees you though you do not see him' (Bukhari and Muslim). It means that all action should be performed with Allah in your vision. If that is not possible always you must realize that Allah is seeing you. This realization is regarded as the basis of true devotion. It signifies that man has identified his will with the Will of Allah and has brought it, at least as far as he is concerned, completely in tune with the Divine Will. Man comes nearest to Allah by excelling in this process of identification man's will with the Divine Will. This enables him to develop the divine spark within him and to illuminate his entire being with that. The most complete example of the realization is that of the Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him) . Though constant remembrance of Allah, through Man's Love of Allah and the Muhammad(peace be upon him) , through obedience to the commandments of Allah and His messenger Muhammad(peace be upon him) , and through constant struggle to promote good and forbid evil man may attain nearness to Allah. This realization is the basis of Piety. This piety is the source of righteousness which is regarded by Islam as the core of *Just* action. Persons who, through *Imān*, *A'māl* and *ihsān* become living symbols of truth represent the reform movement established by the Muhammad(peace be upon him) to reconstruct human life and bring it in accord with Divine Guidance. Such persons constantly remind the rest of Mankind of the true significance of Man's submission to the will of Allah. And

a society which realises these values in its collective life would be the ideal society which Islam wants to establish for the ultimate welfare (*Falah*) of Man.⁷

Life of Prophet (peace be upon him): A brief survey

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in Makkah. In the *Aām'l fil* or the year of the elephant, about 571 C.E. when Abraha invaded Makkah with the evil intent of demolishing *Ka'aba* (so that people may turn to the sanctum built by him down south in Yemen). That mean through the great event of am-al fil Allah had intended to honour his beloved Prophet and his sanctified house.⁸

On the ninth *Rabi'l Awwal*, (22nd April, 571 C.E.) the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born in Makkah in a very respectable and highly connected family in the Quraish.⁹ In the third century C.E., Fihr a descendant of Hazrat Ismāil became prominent as a merchant and came to be known as Quraish a merchant. The name stuck, and after him all his descendants came to be known as Quraish.

Qusai, a descendant of fihr, made himself the master of Makkah. In the fifth century C.E., he renovated the *Ka'aba*, and setup a colony of the Quraish in the immediate neighbourhood of the sacred precincts of the Holy *Ka'aba*.

Qusai was succeeded by 'Abd Manaf, who was in turn succeeded by Hashim. Hashim died young, and was succeeded by his brother Al-Muttalib. Al- Muttalib was succeeded by his nephew Abdul Muttalib bin Hashim.

The father of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was Abdullah and grandfather was Abdul Muttalib. The mother of the Prophet Muhammad was Amina. Her father was Wahab, the chief of the Zohri clan of Yathrib (Madinah). Abdullah died at Yathrib, few months after his marriage, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a posthumous child. Abdul Muttalib named his grandson "Muhammad (peace be upon him)" His mother called him "Ahmad". Muhammad (peace be upon him) lost his father six months before his birth, and he lost his mother when he was hardly six years old.

The young Muhammad (peace be upon him) now became the responsibility of his grandfather Abdul Muttalib. He showered on him the love affection and takes good care of his wellbeing. Abdul Muttalib also died when Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) was nine years old. On the death of Abdul Muttalib, the guardianship of Muhammad (peace be upon him) was transferred to his uncle Abu

Tālib. Abu Tālib was a real brother of Abdullah, the father of the Holy Prophet peace) (be upon him.

At the age of twelve Muhammad(peace be upon him) accompanied his uncle Abu Tālib on a journey to Syria with a trading caravan. At Basra, a town in Syria, a Christian monk Bahira foretold that the young boy Muhammad(peace be upon him) was destined to be a Prophet. He asked Abu Tālib to take good care of him.

As Muhammad(peace be upon him) grew up he began to look at the things around him with concern. The society in which he lived was corrupt in every sphere of life. The whole of Arabia was busy in pleasing false gods, over 360 idols were lodged in the Ka'aba. Prophet came to free the world from the darkness of ignorance and started his mission at the age of fourty and with the help of Allah he carved a just, balanced and fair society out of nothing.

The Arabs knew of no government. Each tribe led its own independent life in its own way. There were acute rivalries and bitter jealousies among the tribes. Small issues will led to the war of centuries. Tribal feuds were spread over generations, exacting heavy toll of life. The Arabs were, however, proud of their poetry, their language, and their eloquence. In their arrogance they regarded themselves as the epitome of wisdom, and dubbed the rest of mankind as “*Ajam*”, (the dumb and speechless). They were steeped in superstitions and freely resorted to the reading of omens the drawing of lots, and other scandalous practices. Sorcery and consultation of the oracles were the order of the day.

The Arabs were also addicted to drinking, gambling lewdness, promiscuity, and moral depravity. Women were treated as chattels and could be bought and sold at will. Poets sang of moral depravities with sense of pride. When a man died, his son inherited his step mothers along with his other property, and could marry them. The birth of a daughter was regarded as a matter of shame and disgrace. Most girls were strangled or buried alive on birth. Slavery was common and the master enjoys power of life and death over the slaves. Usury was the order of the day, and the moneyed Classes exploited the poor and those in need. It was the age of “*Ignorance*” in which evil predominated, and righteousness, virtue and piety were held at naught.

The then the future Prophet Muhammad(upon him peace be) felt dissatisfied with the things around him and he struck a different line of action by leading a

virtuous and righteous life. He was the very soul of honesty. He was very strict in fulfilling his promises. He was confederate, thoughtful, and sweet of disposition, forbearing, noble hearted and a man of principles. He led a serious life, and did not take part in the frivolities that characterised the Makkan society of the day.

At the early stage of manhood, Muhammed(peace be upon him) came to be known as “*Al-Amin*” (the trusted) on account of his moral virtues and marvellous character. He became an active member of the *Hilful Fudul* which was a peace committee, the object of this committee was to establish cordiality among the different tribes in Makkah and to help in the redress of the grievances of the aggrieved persons. On the occasion of the annual Pilgrimage Muhammed(peace be upon him) used to supply water to the Pilgrims, and looked after their comfort. Young Muhammed(on himpeace be up) was very keen to help those in distress.

It is said that when Muhammed (peace be upon him) grew up, he followed the profession of a merchant. He entered into partnership with other persons, and travelled with trade caravans to Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere. In trade his transactions were always fair. He was careful in the fulfilment of contracts and very strict in the maintenance of accounts.

Khadija, a rich Quraish lady, appointed Muhammed (peace be upon him) as manager of her mercantile caravan to Syria. Maisarah, a slave of Khadija, accompanied Muhammed(peace be upon him) on the occasion. Maisarah was struck by the unusual phenomenon of clouds sheltering Muhammed(peace be upon him) from the heat of the Sun. Muhammed(peace be upon him) managed the affairs with great skill and honesty, and as a consequence the business of the lady prospered a good deal. Khadija was very much impressed with the person and character of Muhammed(peace be upon him). She listened with great interest to the accounts of lire slave Maisarah as to how miraculous things happened during the course of journey and how Muhammed(peace be upon him) enjoyed the umbrella of clouds, throughout the journey.

It is true to say that Khadija had a dream wherein she saw the moon descending in her house. Her cousin, Waraqa bin Naufal, a religious scholar of eminence interpreted this dream to signify that she would marry a person who would be the Prophet of Allah.

It said that, Qutaila a sister of Waraqa, told Khadija as to how twenty five years ago she had coveted to marry Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib because of the luminosity of his forehead, and how such luminosity had disappeared when he married Amina and she became pregnant after the consummation of marriage. Qutaila said that Muhammad(peace be upon him) was the person when she had coveted to conceive as he was to be the prophet of Allah.

All these things motivated Khadija to sent a marriage proposal to Muḥammad (peace be upon him). At the time of marriage she was fourty years old, but had all the charms of an Arab beauty. Khadija sent her trusted maid to **Muhammad** upon him (peace be to sound him on the subject. The negotiations bore fruit, Prophet Muḥammad(be peace upon him) and Khadija were duly married. At the time of marriage Prophet Muḥammad(peace be upon him) was only twenty five years old, while Khadija was forty years old. Inspite of the difference of age marriage proved very happy, a matter of the union of hearts. Khadija looked after **Muhammad** (peace be upon him with the devotion of a loving wife. Muḥammad(peace be upon him) managed her business with great skill. The business flourished a good deal and heavy profits were corned. In spite of the wealth at his disposal after the marriage Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) led a simple life, shunning luxury and spending a great part of his money in affording relief to those in distress.

Qasim, Tahir and Tayyib, three sons and Zainab, Ruqayya, Umm Kulsum and Fatima, four daughters were to Prophet Muḥammad(peace be upon him) and Khadija. All the sons died in infancy.

1. Muhammad (peace be upon him) as Prophet of Allah

Muhammad (peace upon him) often retired to a cave in Hira outside Makkah, and there in solitary retreat he would meditate and pray to Allah seeking enlightenment. One day in 610 C. E. when Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) was praying in the cave, something unusual came to pass. The angel Jebriel confronted Muhammad (peace be upon him) and commanded him to recite in the name of Allah. This signified that Allah had commissioned Muhammad (peace be on him) as His Prophet, and he was to communicate the message of Islam to mankind. It was a unique and the highest honour for a human being from Allah and he was Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) the the best human being among the humankind. That was a turning point in history when a man

of exemplary character was chosen as an intermediary between Allah and mankind. It was only the unique person of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to whom Allah had granted revelation and authority and to whom he demanded the obedience of the believer.

The Potent of Character

The holy Prophet (peace be upon him) launches the call for Islam single handed. He faced his people all alone. The Quraish, in the very beginning realised that the Prophet's call for Islam was going to change the structure of society. The moral values of society, rules of trade and commerce Standards of political and social leadership were changing with the emergence of Islamic movement. The *Kalima* "There is no God but Allah and Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him) is the Prophet of Allah", as expected the call for Islam met with early resistance and opposition. With the progress of the Islamic movement its opposition grew stronger in intensity. It was the toughest of opposition ever faced by Prophet Muḥammad^{eace p)} (be upon him). The holy Prophet, with the blessing of Allah had three most effective revolutionary weapons at his disposal which shattered the opposition- The portent character, the Qur'ān and the potent expression. The first and the most effective revolutionary weapons was the character of holy Prophet (peace be upon him), the record of 40 years of his life amidst his enemies at Makkah.¹⁰

This was the pattern of Prophet (peace be upon him) preaching in the light of Qur'ān. On being assigned the office of Prophethood, he was constantly calling people for submission to Allah. The Prophet Muḥammad(peace be upon him) entertained no fear while preaching and continued his mission irrespective of the results. The call given by Prophet (peace be upon him) was strengthen by the purity of his character was spotless in all aspects. The Prophet was ordained to fight wickedness with goodness and nobility. The holy Prophet (peace be upon him) converted his enemy into friends.¹¹

Establishment of justice and peace

Justice and righteousness of the battlefield and waging war with the objective of establishing peace was never the criterion of any nation and ruler. The holy Prophet treated war as a means of establishing peace and uphold principle of justice and kindness even at the battle front. The Qur'ān has justified war as long as there is evil and wickedness. But there is no justification of war when evil has been eradicated and

law and order restored. The holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to incorporate these Islamic principles in his various letters to the heads of states urging them to embrace Islam.

1. Embrace Islam because it was only Islam which provide guarantee to justice and peace.
2. Pay the levy and accept submission (so that people may get an opportunity of understanding Islam and the path of righteousness in order to attain peace and justice)
3. Get ready for war (so that hindrance between your subjects and Islam be removed, and by this removal of their tyrant ruler they may benefit from the blessing of Islam). ¹²

The Black Stone Dispute and Its Amicable Settlement

The judgement in the sacred black stone dispute is a master piece of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Wisdom and nobility. He enjoyed a high reputation among the citizens of Makkah for his truthfulness, honesty, integrity and impartiality. He was immensely respected for his wisdom and foresight. Quraish were engaged in the repair and renovation of that holy Ka'aba. Ka'aba itself was being rebuilt. When the walls were raised 4 feet height a dispute arose about putting the sacred black stone (*Hajre Aswad*) in the Proper place. It soon assumed the dimensions of conflict. All Arabs held the black stone in special reverence. Every tribe wanted to have the honour of placing the holy stone in the Proper context. They were even ready for bloodshed over this issue each tribe tried to establish its right for this honour. Ummayya bin Mogheera advised the elders to leave this issue to Allah and to make any person who first enter the holy shrine from a particular gate as the arbitrator. All of a sudden the holy Prophet (peace be upon him) entered from that gate. People proclaimed in joy, "This is Muhammad(peace be upon him)the trustworthy we will agree to his decision".

After hearing the case, the Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him) ordered for a sheet of cloth and it was brought to him, then the **Prophet**) spread the cloth and he put the sacred stone on it. Then he summoned the elders of different tribes and asked them to carry the sheet to the place where the stone was to be affixed. On reaching there the holy **Prophet** (him peace be upon) lifted it and fixed the holy black

stone in its proper place. It was a manifestation of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) wisdom and strategy even prior to his announcement of Prophethood. This confidence in the Prophet (peace be upon him) attracted many noble hearted men to the Islamic movement.¹³

The Origin of Ḥadīth & Sunnah

The Holy Qur'ān is the fundamental or basic source of Islamic jurisprudence. Next is the importance and authority comes Sunnah and Ḥadīth. Ḥadīth itself derives its authority and legal validity from Holy Qur'ān. Ḥadīth a saying conveyed to man either through hearing or revelation. Ḥadīth the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Sunnah literally means a way or rule or manner of acting or mode of life. In its Islamic legal terminology, Sunnah indicates the doings, deeds and tacit approval of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him).

It is the saying of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), an action or practice of his or a *Taqrir* (Tacit approval), his silent approval of the action or practice of another. The Holy Qur'ān generally deals with the broad principles or essential of religion, going into detail in very rare cases. The details were generally supplied by the Holy **Prophet** (peace be upon him) himself.

Compilation of Aḥadīth in the life time of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him)

The collection of Aḥadīth, there is controversy of opinions that whether the Aḥadīth were written down in the life of Prophet (peace be upon him) or not. However there is evidence that Aḥadīth were written in the life of Prophet (peace be upon him) himself had given his approval for writing them. But what he had strictly instructed was that, it should not be mixed with Qur'ān. Al-Tirmidhi reports, "One day an Ansar (man from Madinah) came to Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and said to that he had a weak memory and he forgets quickly, the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) instructive discourses. The Prophet's peace be upon him reply take the help of your right hand (that is write down). A large number of *Muḥadithūn* like Al- Tirmidhi, Abu Da'uood etc. narrated that Abdullah Ibn Amar Ibn Al-Aas, a young Makkan had habit of writing all that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say. One day his comrades rebuked him, saying that the Prophet (peace be on him) was a human being his kind self sometime be happy and satisfied at other time

annoyed and that it was not desirable that one should note indiscriminately that he uttered. Abdullah went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and asked him that is it allowed to pen down every word you say, he said, he replied 'yes'. Abdullah narrates that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said of course; by God: "nothing that comes out of this mouth is ever a lie". Abdullah gave his compilation the name of *Sahifah – Sadiqah* (the book of truth).¹⁴

Completion of Tradition in the Period of Orthodox Caliphs and Collection of Other Companions

The four orthodox Caliphs took great pains to see that only the correct tradition is narrated. The narrator was asked to swear that he was speaking the truth. Among the judges and traditionalists of this period where the four Caliphs that is Haðrat Abu Bakr, Haðrat Umar, Haðrat Uthman and Haðrat ‘Ali and the following prominent companions of the Prophet Muhammed(peace be upon him)

- 1 Abu Hurairah a companion of the Prophet Muhammed(peace be upon him) has narrated about 5300 traditions.
1. Hafsa, Wife of Prophet Muhammed (peace be on him) and daughter of Umar, the second Caliph, has narrated about 16 traditions.
2. Aisha wife of Prophet Muhammed(peace be upon him) was one most learned lady of the Quraish tribe, she was also an authentic traditionalist. Tradition describes to her by the narrators number 2, 200.
3. Safiya, Wife of Prophet Muhammed(peace be upon him)had narrated 10 traditions.
4. Umm Salma, wife of Prophet Muhammed(peace be upon him) has narrated 378 traditions.
5. Abdullah, son of Umar has narrated 1, 500 traditions.¹⁵

Hadith - a subject of keen interest

The Hadith in this sense that is the report of the sayings and doings of Muhammed(peace be upon him) has been a subject of keen interest among the Muslims since the very life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself. They had accepted him as their sole guide and Prophet (peace be on him). They had completely identified themselves with him in his struggle against the Quraish and the other tribes. With his future and with the future of the faith revealed to him was bound up their

own future. All his actions served them as a president (Sunnah); every word falling from his lips was law of them and all his actions were virtuous in their eyes which they wanted to follow as faithfully as they could.

The Ahadith in this sense of the reports of the sayings and doings of Muḥammad(peace be upon him) has been subjected to keen pursuit and constant study by the Muslims throughout the Muslim world since the very beginning of the history of Islam up to present times. Some of them wrote down what he said in Sahifas which were later on read by them to their student and which were preserved in their families and also by the follower (*Tabiun*). After the death Prophet (peace be upon him), when his companions spread in various countries some of them as well as their follower undertook long arduous journeys, courted poverty and penury in order to collect them together.¹⁶

As a matter of fact, it is said there have been a common practice among the friends of Muḥammad (be upon him peace) that whenever any two of them met, one of them enquired from other whether any Hadith (The news of the sayings and the doings of the Prophet) is discussed or said by the **Proph^t**¹⁷.

After the death of Muḥammad(peace be upon him) the importance of Ahadith grew greater and greater. The life of the Prophet (peace be upon him), his discourses and utterances, his actions, his salient approval and even his passive conduct, constituted next to the Qur’ān and the second most important source of law for the young Muslim Empire. Muḥammad(peace be upon him) himself attached good deal of importance of the knowledge of his own Ahadith. He asked his followers to acquire knowledge and teach it to other and explain knowledge. He included in it the Qur’ān and the Sunnah. The course of study prescribed by him to the *Ashab al- Suffa* include the Qur’ān , the Sunnah and the art writing. The Hadith originated in the early life of the Prophet (peace be on him) of Islam then spread simultaneously with the spread of Islam throughout the vast Muslim dominions. The Muslim armies which conquered Syria Palestine, Egypt and Persia included a large number of the companions of Muḥammad(peace be upon him), who carried his Ahadith wherever they went. The message of Sunnah and the Qur’ān had been arrived in India before its conquest by the Muslims before the end of the first century.¹⁸

THE KINDS OF HADITH

- A) All the sayings and utterances of Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him)
“*Qawl*”,
- B) The actions and daily practices of the Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him)
‘*F’al*’
- C) The tacit approval on the part of the Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him) of acts done and practices carried on by his followers “*Iqrar*”.

Hadith can be classified from Several Points of View.

Irrespective of their origin they are divided into two: (1) Ḥadīth -i-kudsi and (2) Ḥadīth -i-Nabvi.

The Ḥadīth -i-Kudsi is the sayings of the Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him) under divine inspiration,

The Ḥadīth -i-Nabvi is his sayings from his own-uninspired judgement. Both kinds have force of law.¹⁹

The Hadith Collections

Shafii’s assurances that the corporate body of Ḥadīth experts possessed between them the entire corpus of the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) proceeded to publish the collection of Aḥadīth. A number of great collections were now completed. Two techniques were adopted, resulting in two type of collection. One type was arranged ‘according to the men’. The Ḥadīth traced from different major past personalities formed the individual section of a collection which was then, in consequence called a *Musnad*. It was only the unique person of the Prophet Muḥammad(peace be upon him) to whom Allah had granted revelation and authority and to whom he demanded the obedience of the believer.²⁰

Haḍrat Umar after the death of Muḥammad(peace be upon him) intended to collect the Ḥadīth with the help of his sincere friends, he devoted much time and paid sincere consideration regarding the writing of Aḥadīth. But at the first instance, he had to give up the idea of writing Aḥadīth due to fear of the Qur’ān, the paramount source of Islamic law being neglected by the Muslim world and Ḥadīth might have got more attraction.²¹

The earliest completion of such recorded tradition supported in each instance by a chain of authorities tracing it back to the Prophet (peace be upon him) was the

first biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him) by Ibn Ishāq. Then followed Imam Malik's famous hand book on *Muw'atta* based on the same Principle on *Sanad* and *Matn*. Thereafter, followed Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal's work, *Musand* giving all the tradition attributed to one companion and then going to another.

“The Ahadith have elaborated and fixed the academic and practical meaning of the Qur’ānic *āyāt* (verses) from every angle. The Hadith have explained the principles relating to all branches of human life in such a miraculous manner that no room has been left for any fraud to resort to his fraudulent methods. The Ahadith of Prophet (peace be upon him) have provided the Ummah with guidance in detail for every aspect of life which will arise until the day of *qiyāmah* be it faith or practice, free will of fatalism, obedience to government or speaking up against oppression and injustice. Thus noble Qur’ān has designated this Ummat as the “*Ummat –i wast*” of “balanced nation”.

Imam Shaffi established the Sunnah as a basis of Islam second in important only to the holy Qur’ān. The Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is an integral as well as dispensable part of Islam, in addition to the Qur’ān.²² Verily Allah says

“*You have indeed in the messenger of Allah a good example for him who looks forward to Allah and the last day, and remembers Allah much*”.²³

The Recognised Collections of Hadith on the “*Muṣannaf*” pattern are the collections of:

1. Al- Bukhari (d. 870 C.E.)
1. Muslim (d. 875 C.E.)
2. Abu Daud (d. 888 C.E.)
3. Al-Tirmizi (d. 892 C.E.)
4. Ibn Maja (d. 886 C.E.)
5. Al-Nasai (d. 915 C.E.)

These books are known as *Al-Kutub Al- Sittah* or the “Six *Sahih*s”. The Collections of Al-Bukhari and Muslim rank high and are known as “*Al-Sahihain*” i.e. authentic and authoritative. The best known collection on the ‘*Musand*’ pattern is the Collection of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 855 C.E.).²⁴

Sihah Sittah (The Six Sound Collections)

All Muslims do have firm faith on the Siḥah Sittah. The Qur’ān and Ḥadīth are the primary sources of guidance for the Muslims. Siḥah Sittah (most authentic six books of Aḥadīth are called Siḥah Sittah, Sihah means true and authentic and Sittah means six in Arabic) is to be seen from the two angles, one is from the angle of teaching and the other is from the angle of authenticity of Aḥadīth. The compilers of these compilations have dealt with these books according to their own understandings. Imam Bukhari has kept in view mainly the method of extraction of *masail* (Istimbat), as is evident from the heading of the chapter of the book called *Tarajim-e-Abwaab*. It is quite famous saying among the scholars of Ḥadīth that the whole earning of Imam Bukhari is his *Tarajim*.

Sahiḥ Muslim of Imam Muslim has its own syntax and methodology as per *asnād* (narrators), while as Imam Abu Dawood has classified his compilation on the basis of content on which the *aimah* of fiqh have based their fatwa, called *mustadlat*. Imam Tirmidhi’s main aim is to describe the *madahib* (different school of fiqh). Imam Nasai’s classified his compilation according to the *shan-i nazul* of Aḥadīth and Ibn Maja wants to mention the less popular Ḥadīth.²⁵

Aḥadīth is not only explanation of the Qur’ān but also second to the Qur’ān regarding the teachings of Islam. The last four are more popularly known by the name of Sunan. “The Qur’ān is the foundational head of Muslim law and absolute and final authority in all cases. It is admitted by all the jurists that Sunnah completes the Qur’ān and the Aḥadīth as two factor outwardly equal in importance to fix the rulers of religious life”. There was no such collection during the life time of Prophet e peace b) (e peace)upon him. Later various circumstances necessitated the collection of Aḥadīth from different traditionalists so that the people of all concerns might get benefit of all the Aḥadīth. The two most important religious institutions of Islam are *salah* and *zakah*, but no direct injunctions regarding these two basic principles were available in the Qur’ān but were unveiled by the sayings of Prophet (peace be upon him).²⁶

Sahih Bukhari

Imam Bukhari, whose full name is Abu Abdullah Muḥammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhari, was born at Bukhara in 194 A.H./810 C.E. His father was the disciple of the

famous Hammad Ibn Zaid and Malik Ibn Anas. His father died when he was a mere boy. He was brought up under the care of his mother in his native town, Bukhara. He started to study Ahadith when he was only 11 years old and by the time that he was 16 had acquired a high reputation for his knowledge thereof.

Imam Bukhari's intensive travels took him through large part of the Muslim world and he visited all the important centres of Islamic learning staying everywhere as long as his pursuit of Ahadith demanded, meeting the traditionalists and learned a lot from them. They had related and communicated to him their own knowledge. He performed Hajj with his mother and brother Ahmad and stayed at Hijaz for six years for the study when he reached the age of 18 he completed the book *Fadayal Sahaba wa al Tabieen*, which he wrote on moonlights while sitting by the grave of the Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him).²⁷

Imam Bukhari then sought to meet the great scholars of the Ahadith in various Muslim countries and for this purpose he travelled to Basra for four or five years and in Al-Hijaz for six years; He travelled to Egypt twice and many times to Kufa and Baghdad. He frequently held discussions with Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal (died July 855) who is said to have been so highly impressed with his abilities that he urged him strongly to stay in Baghdad and relinquish Khurasan as his usual abode.

During all these extensive travels Imam Bukhari had one aim to gather all the possible knowledge and learning to make the greatest possible collections of saying of the Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him). His book *Al-Jami Al-Sahih* was the first written record of Islam of genuine Hadith of the **Muhammad** (be it a ace). He never accepted a Hadith as genuine, unless he knew all there was to know about the life and death of these persons, and after that he checked up the accuracy of Hadith by reference to the surrounding circumstances and to other reports by other friends and companions of the Prophet Muhammad(peace be upon him). His master Imam Abu Bakar Ibn khuzaimah once said to him, “there is no one on the face of the earth who know Ahadith more than the Ahadith than Imam Muhammad(peace be upon him) Ibn Ismail (Al-Bukhari)”. His colleague Abdullah Ibn Abdul Rahman al-Darimi said to him, “I have seen and listed to the scholars of the Hijaz, Iraq, Damascus but I came across no one who possessed more learning than Imam Muhammad Ibn Ismail.”

The most important of these works in the Sahih which is commonly known as Sahih al-Bukhari. The genuineness and accuracy of which had been established beyond the slightest doubt were recorded. It was read out to 90,000 students by the author himself, and it has made his name immortal. It is considered by almost all the traditionalists as the most reliable book in ḥadīth literature, and has been considered by the Muslims generally as an authority next only to the Qur’ān .²⁸

He was not content only merely recording the sayings of Prophet **Muhammad**(peace be upon him). He sought to deduce from them moral or justice principle and also to point out their applications and significance in the field of *Fiqh* (jurisprudence). The Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad(upon him peace be)was classified in this book according to the subject matter and were grouped together in such a way as to illustrate a particular juristic point.

As we have already seen Imam Bukhari main object was to collect together the genuine traditions only. The number of the suspended and corroborative traditions in this book is about 1725. Imam Bukhari , however, wanted not only to collect together what he considered to be genuine traditions, but also to impress their imports upon the mind of his readers, and to show them what legal inferences could be drawn from these traditions. Every chapter has a holding which serves as a key to the contents of the various traditions included in it.²⁹

According to the Sunnites the collection of Imam Bukhari is regarded as the most correct and authentic book after the holy Qur’ān. Hence Sahih Bukhari is the more critical of all. He applied all the rules to test the authenticity of every ḥadīth. He died at Samarqand in 869 C.E. at the age of fifty-nine.

Imam Muslim

Muslim Abdul Hassan Muslim al-Nishapur better known as Imam Muslim, he was born at Nishapur in 817 C.E. He belongs to the Quraish tribe of the Arabs, an off-shoot of the great clan of Rabia. His tribe took more or less important part of the history of Islam since the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). His father Hajjaj al-Quraish was a traditionalist of the great repute and that having learnt and excelled in the various branches of Arabic literature at an early age, he took to the special study of ḥadīth. In the pursuit of this subject he travelled widely and visited all the important centres of learning in Iraq, Hijaz, Egypt, Syria and Baghdad in pursuit of

knowledge and for the collection of Hadith. He devoted his whole life in the pursuit and study of Ahadith.

The most important of works in his Sahih which has been regarded in certain respects as the best work on the subject. In order to compile this book, Muslim examined 300,000 traditions out of which he picked up only 4000 about the genuineness of which the traditionist were unanimous and included them in his Sahih³⁰ from the stand point of classification, arrangement of the subject matter and the authenticity of Isnād the Sahih of the Muslim is peerless. The Sahih of Bukhari and that of Muslim together are known as Sahihain or the two reliable books. Imam Muslim died at Nishapur in 874 at the age of 57.

Imam Abu Da'ud Al- Sijistani

One of the most important Sunan work is that of Abu Da'ud Sulaiman b. al-As hath who examined 500,000 traditions and picked up 4,800 of them for his book on which he laboured for 20 years. Abu Da'ud Sulaiman was born at Sistan in 202 A.H (818 C.E.). Abu Da'ud received his elementary education probably in his native city. When he was 10 years of age, he joined a school in Nishapur. He visited Kufa in 224 and from there he started on his journey in search of knowledge in Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia, Syria, and Egypt. He travelled all the important cities of Ahadith studies and collected where ever it was found. He was contemporary of Imam Bukhari. He wrote many books on Islam and Muslim law. But most important work is the Sunan. It is the third authentic work on Ahadith. According to Imam Ghazzali the Sunan of Abu Da'ud alone is sufficient for a mujtahid or jurist.

Imam Tirmizi

Abu Isa Muhammad b. Isa al- Tirmidhi was born at Tirmiz in Transoxiana in 831 C.E. He was a great traditionalist. He travelled a good deal in order to learn traditions, visited the various centres of Islamic learning in Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia , and Khurasan and associated with the eminent traditionists of his time e.g. Al- Bukhari, Al-Muslim, Abu Da'ud and others. He died at Tirmidh in 279/892. His Jami al-Sahih is one of the six canonical collections of AHadith . He collected 500,000 AHadith out of which he selected about 1,600 for his Sunan. He also wrote *Kitāb -ul-Shamayd* on the life of Prophet (peace be upon him).

Tirmidhi's Jami has been recognized as one of the most important work in Ḥadith literature and has been unanimously included in the six canonical collections of Ahādīth .

Imam Ibn Maja

Abu Abd Allah Muhammad b. Yazid al-Maja (generally known as Ibn Maja which was the title of his father and grandfather). He was born in Iran in 209 A.H 809 C.E. He visited the important centres of learning in Iraq, Basra, Kufa, Syria, Egypt, Ray and Hijaz in quest of Ahādīth. He collected a large number of Ḥadith which he recorded in his Sunan. He was a great writer and wrote a commentary on the holy Qur'ān and a book on history. He compiled several works in Ahādīth of which the most important is the Sunan. In this work, Ibn Maja collected together 4000 traditions in 32 books in 1500 chapters. He also said that the number of the weak traditions in the book was not large (more than 30). He died in 886 C.E.

Al-Nasai

Another important Sunan work is that compiled by Abd al-Rahman Ahmad b. Shoib al-Nasai was born in Nasa (Khurasan) in 215 A.H. 831C.E. He was a pupil of Qutaibah bin said Balkhi. He travelled all the important centres of Ahādīth and spared on pains in collecting authentic Ahādīth. The Sunan of Nasai contains 4,482 Ahādīth arranged under 15 heads sub-divided into 1,744 chapters. He died at Makkah in 303 A.H at the age of 88.³¹

The Four Sunni Imams: Ahl al-Ḥadīth Perspective

1. Imam Abu Hanifa (80 A.H-150 A.H)

The first Imam of the Sunni Muslims and best known by his Kunyah of Abu Hanifa, Numan b. Thabit b. Zutā. Who was of *Ajami* (non-Arab) origin, as the etymology of the last two names suggests and is generally accepted. There are however different theories about his origin and how he came to Arabia. Imam Abu Hanifa was born in 80 A.H.

Nothing is known about Thabit except that he was a trader. His first son was born when he was forty years old and he named him Numan to which fame added in the fullness of time the title of *Imam-e-Azam*, the great Imam. The strictest in this

matter were the Scholars of Kufa. They never admitted anybody below the age of 20 to a Ahadith School.³²

Some Hanafis have gone beyond claiming that Abu Hanifa saw some companions and have claimed that he actually heard traditions from them. It is surprising that even ‘Aini’, commentator on the *Hidayah* has supported this erroneous claim. Some people are of the opinion that Imam Abu Hanifa had heard them from the companions and then after examining them in the light of the principle of Ahadith , has proved that they are not authentic. Debate on matter of Ahadith is complicated exercise. The Imam’s childhood fell in a time of troubles. Hajjaj b. Yusuf was then the governor of Iraq under the Caliph Abd-al-Malik and oppression was the order of the day.

It is said that, Imam Abu Hanifa took no interest at all in Hadith and *kalām*, whereas the fact is that in these disciplines he has an undeniable high standing. In all the disciplines the Imam decided to specialise in Fiqh, because it seemed to him to cater to the needs of the common people, different narrators seem to have put different kinds of gloss upon this simple probability.³³

Abu Hanifa had about the same time started to teach Ahadith, also about which we shall have something to say in detail later on, yet he regularly attended Hammad’s lectures. He felt that it would not be possible for him to do the kind of original work he wanted to do in Fiqh without full knowledge of Hadith. At that period the teaching of Ahadith was going on vigorously in all Islamic countries and everywhere authorities and narrations were being recorded. The companions, ten thousand in number had spread far and wide, and become the nucleus of great system of authorities and narrations. People flocked to him from far and near, eager to hear first-hand accounts of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and get authentic answers to questions of law exercising their minds. In this way a large body of Tabiin, who were called disciples of the companions had come into existence with its ramifications in all the Islamic countries.³⁴

Kufa, Imam Abu Hanifa’s place of birth and residence was in the vanguard of this expansion of Islamic learning. Many Muslim scholars are of the opinion that there was practically no Muhaddith at Kufa at whose feet Abu Hanifa did not sit to learn

traditions. But on the other hand, Abu'l Mahasin Shafii, giving a list of Abu Hanifa's Ahadith teachers, says that ninety-three of them belonged to Kufa.

The 2nd city where Abu Hanifa received his education in Ahadith was Basra, a rich treasure –house of Ahadith because of the presence of Hasan al-Basri, Shu'bah and Qatadah.³⁵

Although Imam Abu Hanifa had acquired the status of *Mujtahid* (a final authority) during Hammad's life time at a comparatively early age. He was around forty years old at the time of Hammad's death. Yet his sincere regard for his teacher did not permit him to establish a school of his own while the teacher was still alive.³⁶

There are three books attributed to Abu Hanifa namely *Fiqh al-Akbar*, *Al-Alim wa'l-Mutaallim* and *Musanad*. All books are lost or destroyed and not available.

Imam Abu Hanifa was very much attracted to *kalām* in the early part of his education career. Towards the close of the periods of companions many new sects arose. Mabad al-Juhani introduces the doctrine of *Qadr*. Wasil b. Ata, who was a great scholar of Arabic literature and *kalām* and a disciple of Hasan Basri, laid the foundation of *Itizal* (Mu'tazila). Jaham b. Safwan founded the Jahmiyya sect.³⁷

The Imam does not deny that faith can increase or decrease qualitatively, but it can increase or decrease quantitatively and this is a corollary of this assertion that works are not part of faith. The Imam also maintains that faith does not vary in content and that in respect of belief all Muslims are equal. The articles of faith are same for all of them. The companions and common Muslims alike believe in divine unity and Prophethood. If there is any difference between them it is in the intensity of their belief. The Imam described this while replying to "Uthman Batti" in these words. "The dwellers of heaven and earth have the same religion".

Imam Abu Hanifa was not well versed in Ahadith. The fact nevertheless remains that he is not commonly known as *Muhaddith*. Imam Abu Hanifa enjoys no eminence in Ahadith is quite understandable he has no work on that subject to his credit. Imam Malik and Imam Shafii are not known as *Muhaddithin* and then their works on Ahadith have not gained anything like popularity enjoyed by the six Sihah. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is better known in Ahadith than these three.³⁸

It is generally said that the accepted rule of Fiqh had been collected by Imam Abu Hanifa's time that existed for the most part in the shape of oral traditions and had not been systematised into regular discipline.³⁹

When Imam Abu Hanifa felt the effect of prison he bent down in Prayer and died (Rajab 150) in that posture. First funeral prayer was performed attended by fifty thousand people. But people still kept coming so the prayer held for six times over and it was not till sunset that the burial took place. The Imam while dying had expressed the wish to be buried in the graveyard at Khaizran.⁴⁰

Imam Abu Hanifa studied Ahadith, collected Ahadith and also preserved Ahadith. Regarding the exact number of collection of Ahadith is a matter of controversy. Muslim scholars are of the opinion that nearing one hundred Ahadith was under his possession, remaining Ahadith which he collected were burnt or destroyed because of authenticity. It proved that Imam Abu Hanifa had great respect for Ahadith and was very careful regarding the collection of Ahadith.

We therefore, of the opinion that Imam Abu Hanifa was very keen interest on both the basic sources of Islamic law e.g., The Qur'an and Ahadith. Hence, Imam Abu Hanifa should be treated as Ahle-Hadith in general sense and definitely Ahl-e-Ray in particular. In Ahl-e- Hadith perspective Imam Abu Hanifa was Ahl-e- Hadith as well as Ahl-e-Ray.

Imam Malik Ibn Anas (93 A.H-179 A.H or 713.C.E-795 C.E)

His full name is Abu 'Abd Allah Malik Ibn Anas. He was born at Madinah in the year 93 A.H(713 A.D).He belonged to the Humair, who are included in the Banu Taim Ibn Murra (Taim Quraish).He was not only a great traditionalist but a jurist who founded a school of jurisprudence, which is known after his name as Maliki school of Islamic Jurisprudence. He learnt Hadith from Abdur Rehman Ibn Hurmuz, Nafi Ibn Zakwan and Yahya Ibn Sayed. He studied Fiqh with the celebrated jurists of Madinah, Rabia Ibn Farrukh (died 132 A.H) who cultivated Ra'y in Madinah; hence he is called *Rabi'at-al-Ray*.⁴¹

Imam Malik started giving discourses on fiqh and Hadith when he got permission from his Shuyukh of Hadith and jurisprudence. He used to give sermons in the Mosque of the Prophet (peace be upon him) (Masjid-e-Nabvi). scholars & people gathered around him to learn Fiqh and Hadith and to get solutions of legal

problems. His book, the *Muw'atta*, though comparatively small collections of Ḥadīth and limited only to Ḥadīth and practices of the people of Madīnah is the first work of its kind, and one of the most authoritative, Mansur came to know about this, he requested Imam Malik to visit Iraq. When Mansur came for Pilgrimage (Hajj) he visited and met Imam Malik and showed great honour. He spent his 50 years of life in the study of jurisprudence and Ḥadīth and died at the age of 85 in the year 179 Islamic Era in Madīnah and buried in al-Baki. After his death his disciples continued to work on the same line and spread the doctrines of the School in many countries of the world.

Imam Malik was a great jurist as well as traditionalist. His first source was, essentially the Holy Qur'ān and then come the traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Among traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he preferred the traditions which were collected and narrated by the traditionist of Madinah. Her sources of law are Qur'añ, Ḥadīth, sunnah and Ijma. Finally, the last two sources of law for him were *Qiyās* and *Iṣṭislah*. He did not rely much on *Qiyās* like Imam Abu Hanifa. This was the procedure adopted by Imam Malik in deciding legal problems.⁴²

The Malikis recognise the validity of Ijma of the Companions (*Sahaba*) and the successors (*Tabai*) residing at Madina without reference to the opinion of others.

Imam Malik says that sacred learning if not confined to Madīnah but was mostly to be found there, meaning during the time of the companions and their successors and that special sanctity attached to that sacred city, as it was the place where the Prophet (peace be upon him) took refuge and carried out the mission of Islam. This is also true that men, learned in the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth and the law dispersed to all parts of Arabia, some during the Prophet's (peace be upon him) life time and others after his death.

Madinah was the house of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Consequently all Madinites were companions and devotees of the Prophet (peace be upon him). They had opportunity to be very close to the Prophet (peace be upon him), every word and every action of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was recorded in the hearts of the people with the result that true Islamic spirit is reflected in their deeds and practices.

Malikis recognise the authority of Ijma not merely in the matters of law and religion but also in other matter such as organisation of army, preparations for war

and in other matters of administration of the state. Ijma, no doubt, was of the supreme authority and hence is characterised as law where as Ijma of other places may be of local nature and comparatively of lesser authority. Therefore, Imam Malik preferred and gave more importance to such *Ijma* of superior authority.⁴³

Qiyās is defined by Malikis as “The account of deduction with the original text in respect of the *Illat* or effective cause of its law”. In principle all the three Imams, Abu Hanifa, Malik and Imam Shafii accepted *Qiyās* or analogical deduction. An analogical deduction may be founded according to the Malikis on the law established either by a text of the Qur’ān or Hadith, or by a unanimous decision of the learned and according to some Shafis and Hanbalis it may also be based on another analogical deduction.

Imam Malik established the Sunnah or living tradition in favour of his doctrine, adds systematic reasoning because one wishes to understand and concludes the Sunnah is proof enough, but one also wants to know the reason, and this is found in the principle of *Ra'y*, Malikis reasoning is inspired by material consideration by Practical expediency-

On the whole, Malik’s contribution to legal reasoning is his success in steering a middle course through the opinions of the other Scholars.⁴⁴

Imam Malik propounded a doctrine somewhat similar to juristic equity or preference. He would allow a deduction of law to be based on general considerations of the public good (Masalihu'l Mursala wa'l-Istislah)

In the School of Imam Malik subjective element in *Ra'y* has been recognised as legitimate, it is called *Istislah* (consideration) of what is beneficial or expedient.

There is no great distinction between the principle of *Istihsan* of Imam Abu Hanifa & the Maliki doctrine of public good as the aim of both is to reduce the rigidity of law in the interest of public good or welfare, which is the basic aim of Islamic legislation Malik used traditions more copiously and took refuge in opinion less frequently without opinion, he could not have built his system; but for him it was not so much a primary principle as a means of escape. One principle of great freedom he did derive from it and lay down with clearance it is the conception of the public advantage (*Istislah*) when a rule would work general injury it is to be set aside even in the teeth of a valid analogy. It is nearly the same as the preference of Abu Hanifa. The

technical term *Iṣṭislah*, chosen by Malik to express his idea, was probably intended to distinguish it from that of Abu Hanifa, also to suggest in the public advantage (*Maslaha*) a more valid basis than the mere preference of the legislator.

The *Iṣṭislah* as a Principle of public utility is sound one, only thing is that in its application, strict care must be taken so that it may not exceed the limit and must be within the ambit of the textual law of Islam-one striking example of a decision of Imam Malik regarding lost husband, he decided keeping in view of the welfare of the society and the wife that she could marry after a lapse of 4 years.⁴⁵

Imam Malik's great work is the *Kitāb -al-Muw'atta* (paved way). It is the oldest corpus jurist of the Sunni branch of Islamic jurisprudence that has survived from the early period of *fiqh*. Imam Malik's *Muw'atta* represents a codification of the *fiqh* as it developed in the Hijaz in its theological centre Madina. Its object is to give a survey of law and justice, ritual and practice of religion according to the Ijma of Islam in Madinah, Malik desired to help this interest on the basis of the practice in the Hijaz and to codify and systematise the customary law of Madīnah. The *Muw'atta* represent the transition from the simple *fiqh* of the earliest period to the pure science of Hadith of the later period.

Imam Malik was not alone among his contemporaries in the composition of the *Muw'atta*; *al-Madjashun* (died 164) is said to have dealt with the consensus of the learned of the Madīnah without quoting the pertinent traditions and works quite in the style of *Muw'atta* are recorded by several Madīnah scholars of the same time, but nothing of them has survived to us. The success of the *Muw'atta* is due to the fact that it always takes an average view or adopt middle course on disputed points.

Imam Malik's *Muw'atta* got so much respect and fame that every scholar felt proud to refer it. The Abbasid Caliph like Harun al Rashid, Amin and Ma'mun consulted it. No book in Hadith got such fame and no other work in authority can be compared with *Muw'atta*. Therefore, Imam Shafii aptly remarked that “*Beneath the sky, on the earth, no book after holy Qur'ān is so authentic like Muw'atta*”.

Imam Malik had based his *fiqh* on the traditions or Ahadith whether it may be *Musnad* or *Mursil*, Abu Bakr stated that in *Muw'atta* the total number of Mulasil (connected) Ahadith are 1720 and among them 600 *Muwqoof* and 275 are the *qual* of Tabayeen (Sayings of Tabayeen).⁴⁶

1. His greatest contribution is his book *Muw'atta*. Regarding the importance of this book, we have already mentioned that Imam Shafii remarked, "Beneath the sky on the earth, no book after holy Qur'ān is more authentic than *Muw'atta-e-Imam Malik*"
2. Imam Malik was great traditionalist as well as a jurist of high rank. He studied fiqh under the great jurist Rabia Ibn Farrukh known as *Rabiat-al-Ray* and others. Even his teachers admitted and appreciated his proficiency and great ability in fiqh and Ahadith. He was a great Muhaddith. Imam Shafii said, "He was like a shining star in the sky of knowledge". Imam Bukhari said that his chain of transmission of Ahadith was more perfect and authentic.

Imam Malik was a pious man devoted his whole life for the progress and development of Islamic legal learning. He supported Nafees Zakia Alvi by his fatwa against the Abbasi Caliph Mansur. As a great Scholar of Islamic learning he got respect from public as well as rulers. It is said that Harun Rasheed used to visit to hear *Muw'atta* and gave great respect to him.

Imam Malik had written a book on *fiqh* and Ahadith which had already been dealt in detail. Now the works of his disciples and other scholars on Maliki *Fiqh* are mentioned below as Imam Malik had not himself codified his principles of law. In fact this is the work of his learned disciples who preserved the master's legal learning for posterity.

1. *Al-Mudawwana al-Kubra of Shanun*
2. *Kitāb al wasa-e-wa'al Shurut*
3. *Kitāb al Jami Muhammad*(peace be upon him) *Ibn Shanun*
4. *Kitāb al Mabsut by Qadi Ismail Ishaq*
5. *Kitāb Ahkam al-Qur'ān*
6. *Kitāb Adab-al-Qadat*
7. *Kitāb Usul*⁴⁷

Imam Shafii-(150 A.H-204 A.H. OR 767 C.E. 820 C.E.)

His full name is Abu 'Abdullah Muḥammad Ibn Idris Ash-shafii, the founder of Shafii School of Islamic jurisprudence, was born in 150 A.H. (767 C.E.) in Ghazza

(Palestine). He belonged to the tribe of Quraish; he was a Hashmi and thus, remotely connected with the Prophet Muḥammad(peace on him be up). He related to the Prophet (peace be upon him) from paternal as well as from maternal side. His father died when he was only two years old and was brought up in very humble circumstances by his mother in the sacred city of Makkah. In Makkah, he studied Ḥadīth and *fīqh* with Muslim Ibn Khalid Zindji (died 180 A.H.) And Sufiyan Ibn Aina (died 198 A.H.). He memorised holy Qur’ān and Muw’atta at the age of 10 years when he was about 20 years he went to Madīnah to Malik Ibn Anas, studied *Fiqh* under him. In the period of Caliph Harun Rashid he took an appointment in Yemen and was charged as a prisoner with other Alids to Caliph Harun al Rashid to Rakk (803 C.E.) He was pardoned and then became intimate with the celebrated Hanafi jurist, Muḥammad Ibn al-Hasan al Shaibān and studied *fīqh* under him. In this way he got mastery in Hanafi Jurisprudence as well as Maliki. He went to Egypt via Harran and Syria that he went to Baghdad set up successfully as a teacher there developed a School of jurisprudence influenced by both Hanafi and Maliki *fīqh*. There he attached to Governor of Egypt. Abbas Ibn Musa came to Egypt on Shawwal 28,198 A.H (June 21,814 A.D.) as a result of disturbances there, he left Egypt and went to Makkah, from where he returned in 200 A.H. (815/816 C.E.) to Egypt and remained there till his death in 204 A.H. He died on the last day of Rajab 204 A.H. (20th January 820 C.E.) in Fustat and was buried at the foot of the Mukattam in the vault of Banu Abd al-Hakam.⁴⁸

Imam Shafii as a Jurist

Imam Shafii based his doctrine on the Holy Qur’ān. He says “Qur’ān is the basis of legal knowledge”. The Qur’ān serves the double purpose of supplying raw material for legislation, as the basic source of law, and an inspiring ideal for the Scholar who aimed at shaping his system of law in harmony with that model. In *Risala Imam Shafii* had given 220 Quranic citations either as specific rules of law or as examples for formulating principles of law.

Next to the Qur’ān, Shafii stressed on the Prophet’s (peace be upon him) Sunnah. He was upholder of traditions and got the title of Nasir of Sunnat. But he adopted middle course in following traditions, between Imam Abu Hanifa, who leaned more on passages in the Qur’ān and his own deductive opinion, and Imam Malik who leaned more on traditions, usages and practices of Madīnah.

The Qur'ān does not contradict the traditions, but the traditions from the Prophet (peace be upon him) explain the Qur'ān. He made extensive use of the Ahādīth collected from different centres; Sunnah is established only by tradition going back to the Prophet (peace be upon him), not by practice or consensus.

Imam Shafii was strong supporter of the doctrine of Ijma by Ijma (consensus) Shafii does not mean merely the agreement of a few scholars of a certain town or locality but the consensus of the majority of leading jurists in Muslim lands. He in fact universalized the institution of Ijma and made a doctrine for all people of all ages. He allowed greater scope of Ijma (consensus of opinion) putting a more liberal and workable interpretation on the well-known diction of the **Prophet** (peace upon him).

According to Imam Shafii, Ijma may be based on a text of the Qur'ān or of Ahādīth or an analogy. The Shafii accepted the authority of Ijma not only in religion but also in temporal matters such as organisation of the army, preparations for war and other questions of administration of the state.⁴⁹

Imam Shafii was the first jurist who laid down regular rules for *Qiyās* or analogical deduction. The fourth doctrine on which Shafii based his doctrine after Ijma is *Qiyās* or analogical deduction. Shafii's define *Qiyās* as “the accord of a known thing with a known thing by reason of the equality of the one with the other in the respect of the effective cause of its law”.

Qiyās is a variety of *Ijtihād* of which Shafii approves, provided there is a relevant text in the Qur'ān or traditions strength of which analogy could be applied. *Ijtihād*, Shafii says, is the method of reasoning, based on certain indications, leading to correct decisions.

Shafii discussed *Ijtihād* (personal reasoning) and *Qiyās* (analogy) at greater length than consensus, because he tried to limit the use of personal reasoning, in the wide and unrestricted sense. The position of *Al-Shafii* seems to have been that the reason for a command was to be considered in drawing an analogy, but that there must be some clear guidance in the text itself, pointing to reason.⁵⁰

Works of Imam Shafii and Shafii School of Thought

1. *Kiṭāb al-Rashid Fi 7usul al-Fiqh*.

This is the first book on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence written by Imam Shafii which is universally known as *Kiṭāb-al-Rashid Fi-‘usul al Fiqh*, often abridged as *Kiṭāb-al-Risala*.

2. *Kiṭāb al Umm*.

The present components of the umm are writings quoted by al’Baihaqi as separate works; *Kiṭāb al Ijma Kiṭāb al Ibtal al-Istihsan*, *Kiṭāb al Bayan al Fard*, *Kiṭāb al-Sifat al Amr wal’l-Nahy*. *Kiṭāb al Ikhtilaf al Iraqians i.e., The Kiṭāb al Ikhtilaf al-Hadith* The *Kiṭāb al-Mabsut fil Fiqh*

3. There has also survived a profession of faith by Shafii entitled *Kiṭāb -al-Shafii*
4. *Kiṭāb al Fiqh al Akbar*
5. *Buwaiti* had written the following books
 - a. *Mukthasar Kabir*
 - b. *Mukhtasar Saghir*
 - c. *Kiṭāb al Saghir*
6. *Shariah Risala Shafii* by Abu Bakr-Muhammad(peace be upon him) Ibn Abdullah.
7. *Kiṭāb al Fasul fil Marifat al Usual* by Abu Ishaq Muzani.
8. *Kiṭāb al Shurut al Wasayeq* by Muzani.
9. *Kiṭāb al Wasaya wa al Hisab* by Muzani.
10. *Kiṭāb al Khusoos wa al Umm* by Muzani.

The Shafii school of thought is immediately followed by Egypt later on by other countries. It is still predominant in South Arabia, Bahrain, Malay, Archipelago, the former German East Africa and some parts of Central Asia and even in South India and Pakistan many Muslims are followers of this school.

Imam Shafii, who rejected *Istihsan*, accepted *Istidalal* as source of law. In Shafii’s view, *Istidalal* is the name for a distinct method of juristic ratiocination not falling within the scope for interpretation or analogy.⁵¹

Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (164A.H-241A.H)

Imām Abū ‘Abdullah Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ḥanbal, commonly known as Ibn Ḥanbal was the founder of the Ḥanbalī School of Islamic jurisprudence. Imām Ibn Ḥanbal was born at Baghdad on Rabī‘ al-Awwal 164 A.H (November-780 C.E.)

He belonged to the family of *Shaibān*. He studied under different scholars and made extensive travels to learn *Ahadīth* and *Fiqh*. In his early age he studied *Fiqh* under Imām Abū Yūsuf and heard *Ahadīth* from Hishām and Sufyān Ibn Aina and other traditionists (*Muhaddithīn*). His inclination of mind was towards the study of *Ahadīth*; therefore he made a very extensive study of *Ahadīth* and went to Makkah and Yemen and many other cities of Islamic learning. After he returned home, he took lessons from Imām Shafī‘ī in *Fiqh* and *Fiqh al-Usūl* (810-813 C.E.). His religious turn of mind was increased and law unalterably determined by the old traditional views. He had the opportunity to exemplify them when under Caliphs Al-Māmun, Al-Mu’tasim and Al-Wāthiq (833-849 C.E.), the Mutazilite definition of dogmas was raised to a state creed and painful proceedings were introduced against acknowledged theologians who would not reserve without professing the doctrine of the creation of the Holy *Qur’ān*.⁵²

At the age of fifteen, he embarked on journeys to different countries to meet various scholars. During his stay in Baghdad, there were two competing schools: *Madrasa al-Āthār* (the school focusing on texts) and *Madrasa al-Rā’i wal-Qiyās* (the school based on opinion and analogy), and Ibn Ḥanbal favoured the former.

Although like other scholars, he too relocated to Hijāz, however he was not as well-known as the leaders of the other schools of jurisprudence because mostly considered him to be a *Muhaddith* (narrator of *Hadīth*) instead of a genuine *Faqīh* (jurist). Ibn Ḥanbal was a strong advocate of the Abbasid government and when al-Mutawakil came to power in 232 A.H., he tortured the *Alāwiyīn* and fiercely opposed the school of *Ahl al-Bayt*, but he paid Ibn Ḥanbal a handsome salary of 4,000 dirhams, and invited him to Samarra to obtain blessings from his presence. Aḥmad Ibn-Ḥanbal wrote his famous work *Musnad Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal* under the reign of Al-Mutawakil and passed away while al-Mutawakil was still in power. His case was similar to that of Imām al-Mālik, whose ideas were also propagated by the Abbasid caliphate, and the Abbasids promoted both of their schools of jurisprudence.

The Ḥanbalī School is the fourth orthodox school of law within Sunni Islam. It derives its decrees from the *Qur’ān* and the Sunnah, which it places above all forms of consensus, opinion or inference. The school accepts as authoritative an opinion given by a Companion of the Prophet (peace be upon him), provided there is no

disagreement with another Companion. In the case of such disagreement, the opinions of the Companion nearest to that of the *Qur'ān* or the Sunnah will prevail.⁵³

The Ḥanbalī school of legal thought was the last of the four major schools of thought to formulate its principles, and built upon the scholarship of Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal. There were many periods in history when the Ḥanbalis numbered a handful, although today the school seems to be making resurgence. From amongst the long line of Ḥanbalī scholars Muwaffaq-al-Dīn ‘Abdullah Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Qudāma Al-Maqdisī is amongst the most famous with his scholastic contributions making an impact on schools other than his own, not only in *Fiqh* but also in *'Aqīdah*. Having grown up in a religious family devoted to learning, he along with relatives would travel to Baghdad to seek knowledge already having benefitted from the scholars of Damascus (his own city) having moved there from Palestine. The Ḥanbalī scholar “Abdul Qādir Ibn Badran discussed the juristic contributions of Ibn Qudāma stating that he wrote four major books in *Fiqh* which served as a curriculum, the first one (*Al-'Umdah*) suitable for the absolute beginner and the last one (*Al-Mughnī*) qualifying the student as a jurist. Many Ḥanbalī scholars past and present have attached great importance to Ibn Qudāma's *A-'Umdah* due to its scholastic value, clear layout, simple language, and providence of basic evidences from the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*. He says in his introduction, “I have abridged this book of fiqh as much as I can and shortened it merely to one opinion of the school so that it will serve as a primer for the reader. Thus, he will not be confused as to what is correct because of differing reports and narrations. Some of my (Muslim) brothers asked me to summarise it so as to make it simple for the teachers and to facilitate its memorisation for students...”

The ease by which the student can encompass all of the major topics of *Fiqh* is facilitated by Ibn Qudāma's method of writing the manual. The chapters begin with a *Hadīth* (prophetic tradition) related from the authentic compilations and Ibn Qudāma's discussion is drawn out of that *Hadīth* – a method which instils within the reader the importance of *Hadīth* as well as encouraging him/her to study the prophetic traditions. It was for reasons such as that many of the great luminaries from amongst the Ḥanbalī school paid attention to this brief primer. Ibn Taymiyyah undertook its explanation which provides an extremely beneficial analysis of the primer although he did not complete it. However, that which he did complete is extremely beneficial for

the student, its depth is realised by the fact that reaching the chapter of pilgrimage took him four volumes! It has been printed by *Dār Ibn Taymiyyah* (Cairo) and *Al Maktab Al Dhāhiriyah* (Damascus).

The most well-known explanation of the primer is *Al-Uddah Sharḥ al-‘Umdah* by the *Faqīh* (jurist) and *Muḥaddith* (traditionalist) ‘Abdul Rahmān Ibn Ibrāhīm Al Maqdisī. His explanation is a detailed exposition of the Ḥanbalī school of thought crammed with evidences from the *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah*. Although *Al-‘Umdah* provides only one position in regards to a legal issue, *Al-Uddah* at many junctures quotes up to three opinions found within the school whilst occasionally mentioning the opinions of the other Imāms, although, this is not an oft occurrence. Some scholars state that *Al-Uddah* is, arguably, an abridged form of Ibn Qudāma’s *Al-Kāfi* (the third book in his curriculum) but written as an explanation to *Al-‘Umdah*.

Al-‘Umdah also has a few contemporary explanations such as that written by ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Al-Jibrīn, and due to its simplicity, it seems to be more of an appropriate starting point for the beginner than *Al-Uddah*. Such is also the case with *Hāshiyah ‘Alā al-‘Umdah Al-Fiqh* by Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Alī Bassām which provides explanatory notes on that accompany of *Al-‘Umdah*.

Al-‘Umdah, being a brief primer in *Ḥanbalī Fiqh* is extremely beneficial for those beginning a new course of study as well as those wanting to go over the basics. The manual consists of short chapters which are very much understandable, and the brevity of the primer leaves the reader thirsty for more. The issues covered within the respective chapters are core points to note, but the intriguing way in which they are presented leaves the reader with deeper questions as if the discussion at hand was intended not only to inform the reader of the legal issue, but to invoke questions deeper into the topic.⁵⁴

Ibn Ḥanbal’s school is based on five main sources; the texts of the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*, the *Fatwas* of the Companions (*Šaḥāba*), if there was nothing to contradict them, the saying (s) of certain of the Companion(s) when these were consistent with the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*, *Da’īf* and *Mursal* traditions and finally, reasoning by *analogy* (*Qiyās*) whenever it was necessary. During his time there were many conflicting problems faced by the ‘*Ulamā’ about the different interpretations given by them. He was much more orthodox in his principles, and this is the reason*

why throughout history, Ḥanbalism had to fight its way out against many powerful opponents belonging to different schools whose principles it opposed. Sometimes its antagonists united to oppose it.⁵⁵

Ibn Ḥanbal did not himself write a jurist methodology (*Usūl al-Fiqh*) and the famous works of his school cannot be said to be strictly in accordance with his thought. His doctrine, as can be found out from the *Masā'il*, is more elementary compared to the latter elaborations, but it has a distinction of setting out the first principles of the methodology of the school. The school of Ibn Ḥanbal spread rapidly up to fourteenth century. In Iran the followers of this school were found all over, in Syria and Palestine this school was started in the eleventh century by ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Shirāzī. Later on the great Ḥanbalite Ibn Taymiyyah, who belonged to Syria, strengthened it there. But after the death of Ibn Taymiyyah Ḥanbalism was on the decline. On the eve, the Turks took the reins of Islam in their hands, all the four schools were officially represented by their Qāḍis in all Islamic centres. The advent of the Turks dealt a severe blow to Ḥanbalism and it was gradually on the decline till the eighteenth century C.E. when all of a sudden a new and vigorous wave appeared in it in the form of Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s movement which showed traces of the effects of Ibn Taymiyyah’s exertion.⁵⁶ Today the school is officially recognized as authoritative in Saudi Arabia and areas within the Persian Gulf

The later history of the school has been characterized by fluctuations in their fortunes. Ḥanbalī scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d.1350) did display more tolerance to other views than their predecessors and were instrumental in making the teachings of Ḥanbalī more generally accessible.⁵⁷

Contribution of Disciples of Imām Ibn Ḥanbal and other Scholars of Ḥanbalī School:

The Ḥanbalites, who represent now the most spare-Islamic Madhhab, were till the 8th (14th) century much more widely spread in the countries of Islam viz Persia; in Isfahan, Rai, Shahrazur and other places, where their religious course seems to have been characterized by extravagancies of various kinds.

In Syria, Palestine, where the Ḥanbalite Madhab was introduced in the 5th (12th) century by ‘Abd al- Wāḥid al-Shīrāzī, it was represented there, till 9th century A.H. and (16th) century C.E. It was also in this space of time that the appearance of Taqī al-dīn Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328C.E.) took up a new fight for the Ḥanbalite theology. Refutation of the rationalistic explanation of the holy *Qur’ān* and traditions- *Tāwīl*- rejection of all innovations, as for instance visiting the tombs, venerating the saints etc. By his fall the prestige of Ḥanbalism suffered considerable loss, until the establishment of Turkish predominance in Muslim world when all the four Schools, thus also the Ḥanbalite one, were represented officially by a *Qādī* in all Islamic centres.

In the 18th century, it appeared in a new, vigorous form, namely, in the movement of Muwahhidūn (Unitarians) or Wahhabi movement.⁵⁸

Five schools of Islamic Jurisprudence

Schools of thought (*Madhāhib*) are the paths people follow to the *Holy Qur’ān* and Holy Prophet Muḥammad (*peace be upon him*). Obviously, these schools of thought were found considerably after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad (*peace be upon him*) and, in fact, never took shape until the time of the Umayyad Caliphate. The common phrase *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal-Jamā‘ah*, for example, became prevalent during the third century *Hijri*. By the year 250 A.H., the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence were being popularized and patronized during the Abbasid Caliphate. The Shia School of thought, on the other hand, continued its growth and progress after Ḥadrat ‘Alī (R.A.) through his descendants who were connected to each other through a chain of narration and knowledge.

Today, the five schools of Islamic thought accepted by all Muslims are the *Ja‘fari*, comprising 23% of the Muslims (Shia); the *Hanafī*, comprising 31%; the *Mālikī*, comprising 25%; the *Shafī‘ī*, comprising 16%; and the *Ḥanbalī*, comprising 4% of the Muslims. The remaining small percentage follows minority schools such as the *Zaydī* and the *Ismāilī* of Shia origin.⁵⁹

Al-Madhab Imām Ibn Ḥanbal:

Al-Madhab Al-Ḥanbalī was the product of the *Fiqh* (rules and regulations) as taught by Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal. As in other Islamic schools of jurisprudence Ahmad

Ibn Ḥanbal's Fiqh deals with *Tawḥīd*, elements of *faith*, elements of *worship* (pillars of Islam), lawful and unlawful, ethics, dealing with other people (*Mu'āmalāt*).

Unlike other Sunni Schools, Al-Ḥanbali's school has almost no use for *Qiyās* (analogy) or *Rā'i* (personal opinion), to such an extent that they even prefer narration of weak *Hadīth* over *Qiyās* or *Rā'i*. It emphasizes taking the *Hadīth* literally (blindly) to such an extent that they were called *Aṣḥāb Al-Hadīth*. Under Ibn Ḥanbal many students learned his *Fiqh* and became famous later on. Chiefly they were Al-Athram, Al-Marūzī, Al-Harbī, ‘Abdullah Ibn Ḥanbal, and Ṣāliḥ Ibn Ḥanbal. They were very active in teaching the Ḥanbali Madhab afterwards though this school never spread extensively.

Also like other Sunni *Madhāhab* unlike Shia, Ḥanbalism do not acknowledge the Imāmah of *Ahl al-Bayt*, though Ibn Ḥanbal was very supportive of *Ahl al-Bayt*. Ḥanbali School began its ascendancy with the full patronage of Khalīfa Al-Mutawakkil around 235 A.H., but it never became widely spread.

By the age of 50 Ibn Ḥanbal witnessed severe crushing measures by the Mu'tazila toward those who did not agree with their views that the *Qur'ān* was Makhlūq (created piecemeal by Allah) according to the need of the time. As'haab Al-Ḥadīth believed the opposite, that the *Qur'ān* was whole and part and parcel of Allah. As a result, suppression by the Mu'tazila fully supported by the Khalīfa (Al-Māmūn, Al-Mu'tasim, and Al-Wāthiq) continued for about 20 years. It was a brutal suppression of any intellectual who did not agree with their view, and As'haab Al-Ḥadīth became the culprits for decades. In 218 A.H. along with many others, Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal was arrested and was to be executed by Khalīfa Al-Māmūn because he stuck to his own conviction and did not agree with the Mu'tazila point of view. It so happened that Al-Māmūn died on an expedition just before he was to give the verdict for the execution of Ibn Ḥanbal. The following Khalīfa, Al-Mu'tasim, had Ibn Ḥanbal in jail, interrogated him about his conviction, lashed him 38 times, but somehow he released him later from jail. The Khalīfa became lenient with Ibn Ḥanbal since it is said that Ibn Ḥanbal was able to circumvent direct confrontation.

As a result Ibn Ḥanbal's reputation skyrocketed with *Aṣ'hāb Al-Hadīth* who shared his views. He became famous later on when Khalīfa Al-Mutawakkil around 234 A.H. took up the cause of *Aṣ'hāb Al-Hadīth* against the Mu'tazila, in a move to

lure the general public to his side. Ibn Ḥanbal became the symbol of Aṣḥāb Al-Ḥadīth resistance to Mu'tazila orthodoxy.

While Khalīfa Al-Mutawakkil was the nemesis of Mu'tazila, he included the devotees of Ahl al-Bayt as archenemy too. A period of unparalleled persecution and killing began to take place, as a result of which the Mu'tazila intellectuals all but vanished. With the cooperation of Aṣḥāb Al-Aḥadīth a new phase of bloodshed began to take shape against any members or sympathizers of Ahl al-Bayt too. Al-Mutawakkil took them as a grave threat to his ruler ship, and he unleashed brutal and very harsh measures to anyone suspected of being loyal to Ahl al-Bayt. These measures were to such an extent, that against the Shia there unfolded the *Nāsibī*, (people who earned their living by making perverted stories and pernicious poems in denouncing and damning the Shi'a). Despite this, Ibn Ḥanbal was brave and outspoken in support of Ahl al-Bayt. He was fearless and undaunted by the attitude of the Khalīfa or the people around. He even narrated more ḥadīth of the Prophet (peace be upon him) on behalf of *Ahl al-Bayt* than most of the *Sihāḥ al-Sittah*, for such was his courage, virtue and nobility. And despite the fact that Al-Mutawakkil was supporting him with 4,000 dirham every month and the auspicious attention he was giving him, Ibn Ḥanbal was uncomfortable of the association with the Khalīfa, to the extent that he evaded and refrained from the bond. Ibn Ḥanbal would accept the gifts from the Khalīfa but would distribute them secretly to the poor.

Imam Ibn Ḥanbal was a highly learned scholar in ḥadīth. He wrote the books of *Manāsik*, (the major and the minor), but his distinction goes more toward the *Musnad of Ibn Ḥanbal*. This book was not quite finished when Ibn Ḥanbal died at the age of 77, and the task of editing, reviewing, and completing it fell in the hands of his son 'Abdullah. *Musnad Ibn Ḥanbal* contained 40,000 Aḥadīth, of which 10,000 were repetitions, and a good many others were weak. Ibn Ḥanbal claimed that he selected the *Hadīth* from among 750,000 circulating *Aḥadīth* at his time, the overwhelming majority of which were fake.⁶⁰

Ibn Ḥanbal: Articulator of Classical Salafiyya:

Imam Ibn Ḥanbal, the founder of the fourth school of Sunni jurisprudence, was the major articulator of this trend. In his fight against the Mu'tazilah's doctrine of the creation of the *Qur'ān*, he laid out the tenets that later shaped the *Salafiyya*.

Imam Ibn Ḥanbal's thought focused on several principles. The first is the primacy of the revealed text over reason. Imam Ibn Ḥanbal saw no contradiction between reason and scripture. Unlike the *Mutakallimūn* (scholastic theologians) who subjected the revealed text to reason, he dismissed *Ta'wīl* (subjective or esoteric interpretation) of the texts and explained them in accordance with Arabic philology, *Hadīth*, and the understanding of the Prophet's Companions and their successors. The second principle is the rejection of *Kalām*.

The *Salafiyya* considered the issues raised by the theological schools as *Bid'ah* (innovation) and confirmed the orthodox view of these matters. The third is strict adherence to the *Qur'ān*, the Sunnah, and the *Consensus* (*Ijmā*) of the pious ancestors. In line with the major Sunni school, Imam Ibn Ḥanbal held the *Qur'ān* and the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to be the authoritative sources for understanding the matters of religion, from which the principles of the *Shari'ah* are derived. He set strict guide lines for the use of *Qiyās* (analogical reasoning).⁶¹ Ibn Taymiyyah regarded him as a *Mujtahid* with in the Ḥanbalī School, but as a result of changes in time and conditions, he departed from it in some respects: he rejected *Taqlīd* (adherence to tradition) and *Ijmā* and approved of the use of *Qiyās* and also maintained his own views on several jurisprudential issues.

Ibn Taymiyyah, a follower of the Ḥanbalī School, jurist, and theologian, contributed greatly to the evolution of the *Salafiyya*. He combated accretions and innovations in religious practices and belief, particularly those introduced by the Sufi orders.⁶²

Imam Ibn Ḥanbal's works, the great collection of traditions known as "Musnad Ahmad" was actually compiled by his Son 'Abdullah from his lectures and was amplified by supplements (*Zawā'id*). It consists of 28,000-29,000 traditions.⁶³

He was more a traditionist than a jurist. He died at Baghdad on the 31st July 855 C.E. It is said 800,000 men and 60,000 women attended his funeral. He was buried in Baghdad cemetery of martyrs in Harbiya Quarter.⁶⁴

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CHAPTER - TWO

SOME PROMINENT ‘ULAMA OF THE MUSLIM WORLD AND THEIR DOCTRINES: *AHL-E-HADITH* PERSPECTIVE

Imam Ibn-Taymiyyah (1263-1328 C.E.)

His full name was Taqīyuddīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyyah, he was born at Harran on Rabi 1st 661A.H. /22 January 1263 C.E. and died at Damascus on 20 Dhul Qa‘dah 728A.H. /26 September 1328 C.E. He was born of a family of Ḥanbalī scholars, and was himself a Ḥanbalī in many, juridical and theological matters, and a *Salafī* on a wide plan. He has had a strong influence on Sunni circles even in the modern period.¹ Belonging to a family which had already given to this school two well-known figures, his uncle Fakhruddīn (d.1225 C.E.), and his paternal grandfather Majduddīn (d.1255C.E.), Ibn Taymiyyah was forced to leave his native town in 667A.H. /1269 C.E. before the approach of the Mongols and to take refuge in Damascus with his father ‘‘Abdul Ḥalīm and his three brothers.²

He emanated as a *Mujtahid* and preached a puritanical reconciliation of Islam in accordance with the Qur’ān and the Sunnah. His time, therefore, is often termed as “The pre- renaissance period in the history of Islam”. He was a Ḥanbalite of the most extreme type who aimed to restore the primitive monotheism taught by Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and to purge Islam of its more recent corruptions and innovations.³

Ibn Taymiyyah was convinced that the efforts of Muslim thinkers influenced by Greek philosophy, Muslim philosophy, [*Falsafa*] and rational theology (*Kalām*) were as misguided as those of the Sufis.⁴

Ibn Taymiyyah’s life was a mix of intellectual activity, preaching, politics and periodic persecutions and imprisonments. He incurred the wrath of some Shafi‘ī and other ‘Ulamā (religious scholars) and theologians for some of his teachings as *Ijtihād* (independent reasoning), the theology and law. He opposed taqlid. He was persecuted and imprisoned in Syria and Egypt.⁵ He possessed a very sound knowledge of all the great works of Ḥanbalī school.⁶

Ibn Taymiyya’s main intention was to follow the Qur’ān and Aḥadīth “to describe Allah only as He has described Himself, in His Book and as the Prophet

(peace be upon him) has described Him in the Sunnah''. His doctrine was centred on and inspired by the spirit of Hanbali school of thought, a doctrine of synthesis or of conciliation "the happy mean" (*wast*), in conformity with the precepts of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. "The dogmatic theologians", "based their system on reason ('Aql), the traditionists based theirs on Hadīth (*Naql*), and the Sufis theirs on free-will (*Irāda*)".⁷

In his definition of faith (*Imān*), Ibn Taymiyyah encompasses the feelings on which it is based, the formulas in which it is expressed and the actions through which it is completed. In politics, he admits the legitimacy of the first four Caliphs (*Khulafā-i-Rāshidūn*) in their chronological order of succession, but distinguished between the problem of the Caliphate (*Khilāfa*) and that of the respective merits (*Tasdīl*) of these four Caliphs; although he declares the obvious superiority of Hadrat Abū Bakr (R.A.) and Hadrat 'Umar (R.A.), he acknowledges that there might be hesitation in pronouncing (*Tawakkuf*) on the respective merits of Hadrat Uthmān (R.A.)' and Hadrat 'Alī (R.A.)'.⁸

Ibn Taymiyyah did not, as is sometimes said, announce the "re-opening" of *Ijtihād*, and still less did he claim this privilege for himself: he did not consider that *Ijtihād* required to be "close". Since its continuance is necessary for the interpretation of the law. But anxious to impose some discipline on this *Ijtihād*, he attempted to define the rules which every *Mujtahid* ought to follow. He attaches much importance to reasoning by analogy (*Qiyās*), which consists first of all in seeking the cause ('Illa) of a judgement (*Hukum*) resulting from the Qur'an or from the Sunnah and then in extending this judgement to all causes which share the same cause. Ibn Taymiyyah was often suspicious of *Maslaha*, which he criticized for approaching methods based on reason (*Rā'i*; *Istihsān*; *Dhawk*; *Kashf*), the application of *Maslaha*, which may apply in any field, including even that of the '*Ibādat*', presupposes a previous long meditation on the *Qur'an*, on Ahadīth and on the jurisprudence of the great doctors of the law.⁹

In the eighteenth century, Arabian reformer Muḥammad Ibn Abdul Wahhāb (1703-1792) drew inspiration from Ibn Taymiyyah. In the face of what he considered spiritual stagnation and continuing Sufi excesses, he sought to reassert the radical 'Oneness' of Allah. It is *innovation* (*Bid'ah*; both unnecessary and irreligious) to attempt to determine the modality of *Tawhīd*. As a Hanbali, he denounced those

Schools of thought traditionally criticized by *Hanafis* as compromising Islamic unity, including the Shia and Mu'tazila, as well as what he considered excessive rationalism on the part of the *Mutakallimūn* (scholastic theologians) and excessive spirituality on the part of the Sufis. In particular he denounced the Sufi and Shia practice of praying to Sufi Saints. Only Allah, he asserted, is worthy of praise and to Allah is due all praise. He considered the belief that saints or angels or even Prophets could intercede with Allah is sheer polytheism. Moreover, he believed it utter heresy to claim knowledge based on any source beyond the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, and the results of logical processes.¹⁰

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah was also active in anti-Mongols propaganda. His legal and theological definitions used in determining whether the Mongols were Muslims or *Kuffār* (sing., *Kāfir*) (nonbelievers) proved to be influential in some places. His enemies then renewed their attacks on his credo *Profession of Faith (Al-Wasitiyya)* written shortly before the arrival of the Mongols in Damascus. Two councils were held on 8 and 12 Rajab 705/24 and 28 January 1306, at the residence of the governor of Damascus, Al-Afram. The second council, a member of which was Safi uddīn al-Hindi (d.1315), a pupil of Fakhruddīn al-Rāzī (d.1209), found that the *Wasitiyya* "was in conformity with the Qur'ān and the Sunnah".¹¹

Granted his liberty, but not authorized to return to Syria, Imam Ibn Taymiyyah, who continued to denounce all the innovations (*Bid'ah*) which he regarded as heretical, soon encountered the opposition of two of the most influential Sufis of Egypt: Ibn 'Atā'ullah (d.1309-10) a pupil of Abul Hasan al Mursi and Karīmuddīn al Amūlī (d.1310-11), the head of the *Dār al-Sayyid al-Suada*.

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah spent his last fifteen years for the propagation of Islam as an independent thinker, and considered by his supporters as an independent *Mujtahid*, he now had as his chief pupil Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d.1350 C.E.), which did much to spread his ideas and indeed shared some of his persecution. Relations between Ḥanbalis and Ash'aris continued often to be strained, as is proved by the incident in Muḥarram 716/April 1316 C.E. which again saw the two schools in disagreement on the question of dogma.¹²

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah's main doctrine was, in Ḥanbalī fashion, based on the supremacy of *Qur'ān* and Sunnah and the *Salaf* (Classical Muslim scholars) as

ultimate authorities. He applied an austere exegetical literalism to the sacred sources. Ibn Taymiyyah condemned the popular practice of Saint Worship and condemned pilgrimages to the *Ziyārat al-Qubūr* (tombs of saints) as *Bid'ah* (innovation) and tantamount to worshiping something other than Allah. He considered the methods and content of *Ilm-al-kalām* (discursive theology), *Falsafa* (peripatetic philosophy), and metaphysical Sufism (though he did encourage pietistic *Taṣawwuf*) as innovation. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah's argument against blind obedience to *Taqlīd* (blind imitation to one of the four Juridical Schools), as well as its epistemological foundation was against basic tenets of Islam. His treatise on faith (*Īmān*) (*Kitāb al-Īmān*) is one of the most profound and subtle treatments of the subject produced in medieval Islam. Many of the later thinkers and trends have depended deeply on Imam Ibn Taymiyyah for their general world view, particularly in their conception of Islam and the *Ummah* and the close connection between politics and religion.¹³

According to Goldziher, Ibn Taymiyyah did not belong to a definite school of thought but was a “Muslim on his own”. In formulating his principles Imam Ibn Taymiyyah aimed at integrating and combining tradition , reason and free will which is defined as “a true Islamic reformism.”¹⁴

The *Muwahhidūn* or Unitarians movement and the Saudi state which emerged from it have been deeply affected by certain ideas of Imam Ibn Taymiyyah. The Unitarians' emphasis on the Qur'an and Sunnah, a literalistic exegesis, distaste for speculative strains of theology and *Taṣawwuf*, a rejection of the visitation of tombs and a conception of the *Ummah* (community) in Madinah as the model for an Islamic state, all reflect Ibn Taymiyyah's outlook.¹⁵

It was under the Ottomans ('Uthmānī) also that Imam Ibn Taymiyyah's ideas, most of which were adopted by Muhammad bin "Abdul Wahhāb (d.1206/1792), gave rise to *Muwahhidūn* movement and to the state of the Saudi dynasty. Ibn Taymiyyah remains today, with Al-Ghazzālī (d.505/1111), and Ibn al-'Arabī (d.638/1240), one of renowned writers who have had the greatest influence on contemporary Islam, particularly in Sunni circles.¹⁶

In his view, the *Salaf* had to balance the sacred sources with their own *Ijtihād* in order to understand and live according to Allah's law. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah thus

employed an *Ijtihād* which also incorporated *Qiyas* (analogical reasoning) and *Īmān* (a deep pietistic belief) was for Ibn Taymiyyah the source and power of all religion.¹⁷

He followed the *Qur'ān* and the *Ahadīth* in the field of dogma. Regarding *Taqlīd*, Ibn Taymiyyah was against the *Taqlīd* of an individual. In his *Fatāwa* he wrote that it is not necessary for a Muslim to leave the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) and make it necessary for himself to follow an individual's actions and sayings, the saying of every individual can be set aside except the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him). At another place he asserts that if a person, who is a follower of Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Imām Mālik, Imām Shafī‘ī or Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, feels that regarding certain problems one is more convincing than the other and follows it then it will of course be better. This clearly points out that Ibn Taymiyyah was against the *Taqlīd* of an individual. On individual basis he did not distinguish between the 'Imāms' but he was strict in following first the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* and then the Companions. He preferred the ideas upheld by the Companions or there early successors regarding the doctrines preached by different Schools.¹⁸ This indicates that Ibn Taymiyyah was in favour of *Ijtihād*. He considered himself a *Mujtahid* at such a time when most of the 'Ulamā' held that the doors of *Ijtihad* were closed.¹⁹

In 1318 C.E., The Sultan forbade Ibn Taymiyyah to issue *Fatawā* on regarding repudiation (*Talāq*) contrary to the prevailing Ḥanbalī doctrine; he was criticized in this regard and finally landed up in prison in the Citadel at Damascus. He was released after a period of five years. But in 1326 he was again arrested and deprived of the rights issue *Fatāwā*. He invited criticism because of his treatise *Ziyārat al-Qubūr* in which he condemned the cult of the Sufi Saints. His brother Zayn uddīn was followed to stay with him and at the same time his pupil Ibn Qayyim Jawziyya was held up in the same prison. He was imprisoned for more than two years but he continued to issue *Fatāwa* and wrote several books and pamphlets defending and justifying his own views and doctrines. Among the books he wrote in prison *Kitāb Ma‘ārif al-Usūl*, on the ideas on the cult of Sufi Saints. The most important of his works of this period is said to be *Al-Bahr al-Muhiṭ* which was a commentary of the *Qur'ān* in forty volumes. His enemies got hold of some of these works and it is said that Al-Ikhnai complained to the Sultan who ordered to deprive him of his paper, ink, and pen. But even then Ibn Taymiyyah did not stop and he wrote with charcoal and devoted his time to worship. Five months later he died in prison on 26 September

1328 C.E. He was buried in the cemetery of the *Sufiyya* in Damascus, where his tomb is still honoured.²⁰

Although Ibn Taymiyyah generally gave the impression of being a rigid conservative, uncompromising with both rationalism as well as un-Islamic Sufi thought and practices, this conception is not fully true. In his writings there can be traced a positive movement of the mind and spirit which seeks to go behind all historic compositions of Islam by all groups of Muslims, to the *Qur'an* itself and to the teachings of the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him). There are enough testimonies which indicate that he did not reject all forms of Sufi , and that he in fact regarded the Sufi ‘intuition’ as being on par with the Ijtihād of orthodox ‘Ulamā’, both of which, he emphasized, must be judged in the light of the *Qur'an* and the Sunnah. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah condemned corrupt from of Sufi practices. ‘He never condemned Sufi thought in itself, but only that which he considered to be, in the case of too many Sufis, in admissible deviations in doctrines, ritual or morals, such as *monism* (*Wahdat al-Wujūd*), antinomianism (*Ibaha*) or esotericism (*Ghuluww*).²¹

Ibn Taymiyyah said:

Ibn Taymiyyah observed that the people who most deserve to be called the victorious group are “*Ahl al-Hadīth wa'l-Sunnah*”, who has no leader to follow blindly apart from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). They are the most knowledgeable people concerning his words and deeds, the most able to distinguish between what is sound and what is not [of Ahadīth]. Their Imāms have deep knowledge of that, they are the ones who understand its meanings and are the most sincere in following it. They accept it and believe in it, and act upon it. They show love to those who adopt it and they show enmity to those who oppose it.

They are the ones who measure any idea against that which is proven in the *Qur'an* and Sunnah, so they never adopt any idea and make it one of the basic principles of their religion unless it is proven in that which the Messenger brought. Rather they make that which the Messenger brought, the *Qur'an* and Sunnah, the foundation and basis of their beliefs. With regard to the issues concerning which people dispute, such as the attributes of Allah, the divine decree, the threat of Hell, the names of Allah and the principle of enjoining what is good and forbidding what

is evil, etc., they refer that to Allah and His Messenger. They examine the general ideas concerning which the different group's dispute and whatever of these ideas is in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah, they approve of it, and whatever goes against the Qur'ān and Sunnah, they reject it. They do not follow conjecture or whims and desires. For following conjecture is ignorance and following whims and desires without any guidance from Allah is wrongdoing. (*Majmul-Fatāwa*, 3/347, 348) We should note that Ahl-e-Hadīth includes everyone who follows the Hadīth of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and gives it precedence over all else, whether he is a scholar or an ordinary Muslim.

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah remarked that, we do not mean by *Ahl al-Hadīth* only those who study it write it down or narrate it, rather we mean anyone who takes care to memorize it, understand it and follow it, both inwardly and outwardly. The same may be said of "*Ahl al-Qur'ān*" (the people of the Qur'ān).

The basic quality of these people is their love of the Qur'ān and Hadīth, referring to them and their meanings, and acting upon what they learn. (*Majmul-Fatāwa*, 4/95).

The Imām have said a great deal on this matter. We can learn more by referring to the sources quoted above, as well as volume 4 of *Majmul-Fatāwa*, *Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah*.²²

He believed that Allah's Self-characterization in revelation was sufficient and, indeed, the only understanding of Allah accessible to humans. That Self-characterization, he believed, was epitomized in the brief passage in the Qur'ān, surah 62, entitled "*Al-Ikh-las* ("the sincere faith") or ("The pure faith"): "in the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful, Say Allah is one, the eternal God. He begot none, nor was he begotten. None is equal to him.") He focused his insistence on the absolute Unity of Allah (*Tawhīd*). People are created with a natural or instinctive recognition (*Fitrah*) of Allah; Imam Ibn Taymiyyah believed moreover, Allah's existence is everywhere reflected in creation. The world is full of *testimony* (*Āyat*) to Allah's existence. These realities themselves are an aspect of *Tawhīd* for Ibn Taymiyyah: Allah as sole creator, ruler, and judge of the world is everywhere reflected in creation. He rejected the rationalists denial of the attributes' reality (*Tanzīh* and *Tat'til*), he also rejected method of considering the divine attributes

allegorically and the traditionalists' literalist or anthropomorphic interpretation of the attributes (*Tashbih*). His approach to the divine essence and attributes was to simply accept them and leave their true meaning a mystery (*Tafwid*).²³

Mongol invasion and other struggles

What has been called Ibn Taymiyyah's "most famous" *Fatwa* was issued against the Mongols in the Mamlūk war. Ibn Taymiyyah declared that Jihād upon the Mongols was not only permissible, but obligatory. He based this ruling on his argument that the Mongols could not, in his opinion, be true Muslims despite the fact that they had converted to Sunni Islam because they ruled using what he considered '*man-made laws*' (their traditional *Yassa* code) rather than *Islamic law* or *Shari‘ah*. Because of this, he reasoned they were living in a state of *Jāhilīyya*, or pre-Islamic pagan ignorance.

Apart from that, he led the resistance of the Mongol invasion of Damascus in 1300 C.E. In the years that followed, Ibn Taymiyyah was engaged in intensive polemic activity against:

1. the Rifā'iyya Sufi order,
2. the *Ittiḥādiyya* school, a school that grew out of the teaching of Ibn ‘Arabī, whose views were widely denounced as heretical

In 1306 C.E. Ibn Taymiyyah was imprisoned in the citadel of Cairo for eighteen months on the charge of anthropomorphism. He was imprison again in 1308 C.E. for several months. In 2010 C.E. a group of Islamic scholars in Mardin argued that Ibn Taymiyyah's *Fatwa* was misprinted into an order to "*fight*" the ruler who is not applying Islamic law, but rather it means to "*treat*". They have based their understanding on the original manuscript in the *Al-Zāhiriyah* Library, and the transmission by Ibn Taymiyyah's student Ibn Muflīh.

Madhab

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah witnessed conversions or reversions to Islam as a growing trend among many Mongols. Ibn Taymiyyah censured the scholars for blindly conforming to the precedence of early jurists without any resort to the Qur'ān and Sunnah. He contended that although juridical precedence has its place, blindly giving it authority without contextualization, sensitivity to societal changes, and

evaluative mind-set in the light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah can lead to ignorance and stagnancy in Islamic Law. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah likened the extremism of *Taqlīd* (blind conformity to juridical precedence or school of thought) to the practice of Jews and Christians who took their Rabbis and Ecclesiastics as gods besides God.

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah held that much of the Islamic scholarship of his time had declined into modes that were inherently against the proper understanding of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. He strove to:

1. Revive the Islamic faith's understanding of true adherence to *Tawhīd*,
2. Eradicate beliefs and customs that he held to be foreign to Islam, and
3. To rejuvenate correct Islamic thought and its related sciences.

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah believed that the first three generations of Islam (*Salaf*) the beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his Companions, and the followers of the Companions from the earliest generations of Muslims – were the best role models for Muslims. Their practice, together with the Qur'ān, constituted a seemingly infallible guide to life. Any deviation from their practice was viewed as *Bid'ah*, or innovation, and to be forbidden. He also praised and wrote a commentary on some of the speeches of Shaykh Sayyid ‘Abdul-Qādir Gilānī and criticized the views and actions of the *Rifā‘iyah*.

Works

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah left a considerable body of works (350 works listed by his student Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya and 500 by his student Al-Dhahabī) that has been republished extensively in Syria, Egypt, Arabia, and India. Extant books and essays written by Ibn Taymiyyah include:

- *A Great Compilation of Fatwa*—(*Majmu al-Fatāwa al-Kubra*) . This was collected centuries after his death, and contains several of the works mentioned below.
- *Minhāj as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah*—(The Pathway of Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah)—Volumes 1–4.
- *Al-'Aqīdah Al-Wāsitīyyah*—(The Creed to the People of Wāsit)

- *Dar' Ta'ārud al- 'Aql wa al-Naql* (The rejection of the conflict between reason and revelation)—10 Volumes. Also called *Al-Muwāfaqa* ("harmony").
- *Majmu al-Fatāwa*—(Compilation of Fatawa) Volumes 1–36
- *Al-Aqīdah Al-Hamawiyah*—(The Creed to the People of Hama, Syria)
- *Al-Asma wa al-Sifāt*—(Allah's Names and Attributes) Volumes 1–2
- *Al-Īmān*—(Faith)
- *Al-Jawāb as Sahīh li man Baddala Din al-Masīh* (Literally, "The Correct Response to those who have Corrupted the (Religion) of the Messiah"; A Muslim theologian's response to Christianity)—seven volumes, over a thousand pages.
- *As-Sārim al-Maslūl 'Ala Shātim ar-Rasūl*—*The Drawn Sword against those who insult the Messenger*. Written in response to an incident in which Ibn Taymiyyah heard a Christian insulting the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). The book is well-known because he wrote it entirely by memory, while in jail, and quoting more than hundreds of references.
- *Fatāwa al-Kubra*
- *Fatāwa al-Misriyyah*
- *Ar-Radd 'ala al-Mantiqiyīn* (Refutation of Greek Logicians)
- *Naqd at-Ta'sīs*
- *al-'Ubūdiyyah*—(Subjection to Allah)
- *Iqtida' as-Sirāt al-Mustaqīm'*—(Following *The Straight Path*)
- *Al-Siyāsah al-Shari'ah*
- *At-Tawassul wal-Wasiṭa*
- *Sharḥ Futūḥ al-Ghayb*—(Commentary on *Revelations of the Unseen* by Shaykh Sayyid 'Abdul-Qādir Gilānī.²⁴

Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya (1292-1350 C.E.)

Shamsuddīn Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Abū Bakr (also known as Ibn Qayyim ("The son of the principal") or Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya ("Son of the principal of the (school of) Jawziyya")) (1292–1350 CE / 691 AH–751 AH) was an Arab Sunni Muslim jurist, commentator on the *Qur'ān* and theologian, although he is sometimes referred to as "the scholar of the heart". In the first half of the fourteenth century, he

was the most prominent theologian and jurist belonging to the school of Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d.955).

Ibn Qayyim was born on the 7th of the Islamic month Safar in the year 691 A.H. (circa Feb. 4, 1292) in the village of Izra' in Hauran, near Damascus, Syria. Little is known of his childhood except that he received a comprehensive Islamic education from his father, at Madrasah al Jawziya centred around Islamic jurisprudence, Hanbali literature, Islamic theology, and '*Ulūm al-Aḥadīth* (lit. the science of Hadīth). From an early age, he was interested in the field of Islamic sciences, learned from the scholars of his time.²⁵

He belonged to a noble family, was his father the superintendent (Qayyim) of the *Jawziyya Madrasa*, which served as a court of law for the Ḥanbalī school of thought. He became Chief Justice of Damascus.²⁶

He was chief propagator of Ibn Taymiyyah's thought. Some important teachers of Ibn Jawziyya were Qāḍī Sulaymān b. Ḥamzah (d.1311) and Shaykh Abū Bakr (d.1318), the most famous pupil of Ibn Taymiyyah.

Ibn Qayyim had a decent career, but since he represented and propagated Ibn Taymiyyah's thoughts, and he was attacked by his opponents, which the neo-Hanbalism of Ibn Taymiyyah encountered in the governmental circles of the Mamluk state.²⁷

When Ibn Taymiyyah returned from Egypt in the year (d. 1312), Ibn Qayyim stayed with him until he died; learning a great deal of knowledge from him, along with the knowledge that he had already attained. So he became a single Scholar in many branches of knowledge.²⁸

In 1326 C.E., Ibn Qayyim was imprisoned in the citadel at Damascus, at the same time as Ibn Taymiyyah, and was not released until 1328 C.E., after the latter's death. In 1331 C.E., he made the pilgrimage to Makkah; it is said that the Syrian caravan, which left Damascus under the leadership of the Amīr Izz-al-dīn Aybak, contained a considerable number of juris-consults and traditionists.²⁹

On 2 Rajab 15 February 1336 C.E., he delivered for the first time the Khutba and on 6 Safar 1342 C.E., he gave his inaugural lecture at the *Sadriyya Madrasa*, where he was to teach until his death. On two occasions he was in disagreement with

Tājuddīn al-Subkī (d.1378), the *Shafi‘ī Qādī al-Quḍāt* of Damascus, on points of *Fiqh*, without however becoming involved in serious quarrels.³⁰

A little later, in 1349 C.E., he was again in disagreement with Al- Subkī, for having given some *Fatwa* on the problem of repudiation (*Talāq*) in conformity with the doctrine of Ibn Taymiyyah; the Bedouin Amīr Sayfuddīn b. Faḍl reconciled him with his adversary.³¹

Ibn Qayyim’s doctrinal and literary output was considerable. A list of his works is preserved in the *Dhayl* of Ibn Rajab. For his *Fawā’id*, and its place in the history of rhetoric, which consist of a commentary on the *Manāzil al-Sā’irīn* of *al-Ansārī*, can be considered as the masterpiece of Ḥanbali mystic literature. *The Islam al-Muwakki’in* or guide of the perfect *Mufti* is a treatise on juridical methodology (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*) following the ideas of Ibn Taymiyyah in this field. In politics, the *Kitab al-Turuk al-Hukmiyya* is based on the ideas set out by Ibn Taymiyyah in his *Hisba* and his *Kitab Al-Sīyasa*. Finally, in the field of *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, there should be mentioned the *Qasīda Nuniyya* an important “profession of faith” in verse directed mainly against the *Ittiḥādiyya*, and also a polemical treatise against the *Jahmiyya*, the *Kitab al-Sawaik al-Mursala*. Several Muslim scholars of the Mamluk period were among Ibn Qayyim’s pupils or were in varying degrees influenced by him; among them were the Shafi‘ī traditionist and historian Ibn Kathir (d.1373), Zaynuddīn Ibn Rajab (d.1397), the last great representative of medieval Ḥanbalism, and Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī (d.1449). Indeed he is still today an author very highly esteemed not only among the *Muwahhidūn*, but also among the *Salafiyya* and in many circles of North African region.³²

Abū Zahra observes that “the writings of Ibn Qayyim, unlike most of the works of Ibn Taymiyyah, are not in an altercating manner but they reflect a gentle disposition and peace of mind and heart. Likewise his works are a reflection of his elegance of arrangement, excellence of division, orderly notions and fluency of style, since, whatever he has written, it is with confidence. For a most conspicuous example three of his books can be mentioned, i.e. *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, *Iddat al-Sābirīn*, and *Miftah dar al-Sā’adah*.³³ They contain a profound philosophy as well as marvellous flair.” He was well versed in all the branches of knowledge of the time – *Tafsīr*, *Hadīth*, *Uṣūl*, *al-Fiqh* and *Furu’*. He was strictly against the *Taqlīd* of an individual in problems concerning *Masā’il*; he was inclined towards Imām Ibn Ḥanbal.

Similarly, in *Uṣūl* and *‘Aqā’id* he strictly adhered to Hanbalism, but in *Furu’* he had his own independent view. He was strictly against philosophers, *Mu’tazila* and *Jahmiyya*, and, like Ibn Taymiyyah he was also an opponent of the *Ittihadiyya* (the monist school) which came into being as a consequence of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s (d.1240) teachings. His views on *Kalām* and philosophy were in³⁴ accordance with those of the *Salaf al- Ṣāliḥ* (the pious ancestors). He dislikes innovators and wanted to guide the Muslims back to the simplicity of early Islam.³⁵

Ibn Qayyim and Ibn Taymiyyah were to some extent influenced by *Taṣawwuf*. But compared to Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim was more influenced by *Taṣawwuf* and it is asserted that he had altered some of the later works of Ibn Taymiyyah. Ibn Qayyim finally left behind him the justified reputation of a writer of great talent, whose eloquence contrasts with the incisive dryness of the succinct prose of his famous master.

His works are highly regarded even in this period, not only among the followers of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab (d.1792) who adopted from them the guidelines for his movement and his teachings but among modern reforms like Muḥammad ‘Abduh (d.1905), Rashid Rida (d.1935), and their followers in the Muslim world.³⁶

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya died at Damascus on 23 Rajab 751 A.H/ 26 September 1350 C.E; he was buried beside his mother in the cemetery of *Bab Saghir*.³⁷

Manners and worship

Many of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah’s students and contemporaries have borne witness to his manners of worship. For instance, Ibn Rajab emphasized:

He was constantly in worship and performing *Tahjjud* (the night Prayer), reaching the limits in lengthening his *Namāz* (Prayer) and devotion. He was constantly in a state of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and had an intense love for Allah. He also had a deep love for turning to Allah in repentance, humbling himself to Him with a deep sense of humility and helplessness. He would throw himself at the doors of Divine obedience and servitude.

Additionally, Ibn Kathir stated that Ibn Jawziyya was constant in humbly entreating and calling upon his Lord. He recited well and had fine manners. He had a

great deal of love and did not harbour any envy or malice towards anyone, nor did he seek to harm or find fault with them. I was one of those who most often kept company with him and was one of the most beloved of people to him. I do not know of anyone in the world in this time. His Salah used to be very lengthy, with prolonged Ruku' (bowing) and prostrations. His colleagues would criticise him for this, yet he never retorted back, nor did he abandon this practice. May Allah bestow His Mercy upon him.

Disciple of Ibn Taymiyyah

Ibn Qayyim ultimately joined the study circle of the Muslim scholar Ibn Taymiyyah, who kept him in his company as his closest student, disciple and his successor. Ibn Qayyim was fervent in his devotion to Islam, and he was a loyal student and disciple of Ibn Taymiyyah. He defended his religious opinions and approaches, and he compiled and edited most of his works, and taught the same.

Because of their views, both the teacher and the student were persecuted, tortured by tyrannical rulers, and humiliated in public by the local authorities, as they were imprisoned in a single cell in the central prison of Damascus, known today as *Al-Qala*.

Spiritual Life

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya was an avid and a resolute worshipper. He devoted long hours to his supererogatory nightly prayers, and was in a constant state of remembrance, as he was known for his extended prostrations. During Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's imprisonment in *Al-Qala* prison in Damascus, he was constantly reading the *Qur'an*, and studying its meanings. Ibn Rajab noted that during that period of seclusion, he gained extensive spiritual success, as well as he developed a great analytical wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the Prophetic traditions.

Upon his release, he performed the pilgrimage to Makkah several times, and sometimes he stayed in Makkah for a prolonged period of devotion and circumambulation of the holy Ka'bah. Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya wrote a lengthy spiritual commentary on a treatise written by the Ḥanbalī Sufi Khwāja ‘Abdullah Anṣārī entitled *Madārij al-Sālikīn*. He expressed his love and appreciation for Anṣārī in this commentary with his statement "certainly I love the Sheikh, but I love the truth

more!”. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya refers to Anṣārī with the honorific title “*Sheikh al-Islam*” in his work *Al-Wabil al-Šayyib min al-Kalim al-Tayyib*.

Works

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's contributions to the Islamic library are extensive, and they particularly deal with the Qur'anic commentaries, and understanding and analysis of the Prophetic traditions (*Fiqh-us Sunnah*), *Zād al-Ma ‘ād* (Provision of the hereafter).

- *Al-Wabil al-Šayyib min al-Kalim al-Tayyib* – a commentary on *Hadīth* about Prophet Yahya Ibn Zakariyya.
- *Ilaam ul Muwaqqi‘īn ‘An Rabb il ‘Ālamīn* (Information for Those who Write on Behalf of the Lord of the Worlds)
- *Tahthīb Sunan Abī Dawūd*
- *Madārij al-Sālikīn* which is a rearrangement of the book by Shaykh Abū Ismā‘il al-Anṣārī al-Harawī al-Sufi, *Manāzil-u Sā‘irīn* (Stations of the Seekers);
- *Tafsir Mu’awwadhatayn* (Exegesis of Surah *Al-Falaq* and *Al-Nas*);
- *Badā‘i‘ al-Fawā‘id* : Amazing Points of Benefit
- *Ad-Dā‘i wa Dawā* also known as *Al Jawābul kāfi liman Sa’ala ‘an Dawā‘i Shāfi*.
- *Hādi Arwah ila bilādil Afrāh*
- *Iddat as-Sābirīn wa Dhakhiratu ash-Shākirīn* .
- *Ighāthatullāh fān min Maṣā‘id ash-Shaytan*: Aid for the Yearning One in Resisting the Shaytān
- *Rawdhatul Muhibbīn*
- *Ahkām Ahl al-dhimma*"
- *Tuhfatul Mawdūd bi Aḥkam al-Mawlūd*: A Gift to the Loved One Regarding the Rulings of the New born
- *Miftah Dar As-Sa‘ādah*
- *Jilā‘ al-Afhām fī Fada‘il Ṣalāti ‘Ala Khayral Anām*

- *Al-Manār al-Munīf*
- *Al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī* – a book on Prophetic medicine (available in English as "The Prophetic Medicine", printed by Dar al-Fikr in Beirut (Lebanon), or as "Healing with the Medicine of the Prophet (peace and blessing be upon him)", printed by Darussalam Publications.
- *Al-Furūsiyya*
- *Shifā al-‘Ailīl (Healing of the Sick)*
- *Mukhtasar al-Sawā'iq*
- *Hādi al-Arwah ila Bilād al-Arfah (Spurring Souls on to the Realms of Joy)*

Sunni view

Testaments about Ibn Qayyim's comprehensive knowledge and firm adherence to the way of the *Salaf* (Pious Predecessors) have been given by a number of Scholars. They include:

- The famed scholar, Al-Hāfidh Ibn Rajab who noted that Ibn Qayyim :

Had deep knowledge concerning *Tafsīr* and fundamentals of the religion, reaching the highest degree concerning them both. Similar was the case in the field of *Aḥadīth*, with regards to understanding its meanings, subtleties and deducing rulings from them. Likewise was the case in the field of *fiqh* and its principles, as well as the Arabic language.
- The widely known *Muhaddith*, Al-Hāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar, stated that Ibn Qayyim :

Possessed a courageous spirit as well as vast and comprehensive knowledge. He had deep knowledge concerning the differences of opinions of the scholars and about the ways of the *Ṣalaf*.
- The famous Egyptian scholar, Al-Suyūṭī emphasized :

His books had no equal and he strove and traversed the path of the great Imāms in (the field of) *Tafsīr*, *Hadīth*, fundamentals, branches and the Arabic language.
- The notable Ḥanafī scholar, ‘Alī al-Qādī, stated:

It will be clear to whoever aspires to read the explanation of *Manāzilus-Sā’irīn*, that they (i.e. both Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim) are from the great ones of *Ahl Al-Sunna Wal-Jama’ah*, and from the righteous path of this *Ummah*.³⁸

Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhab (1703-1792 C.E.)

The most remarkable changes which Arabia has witnessed since the days of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), was that affected by the movement of Muhammed Abdul Wahhāb in the eighteenth century C.E. The chief aim of the movement was to remove all the accretions and innovations that had beclouded a pure and unadulterated version of Islam. In essence it was ‘puritanical, vigorous, and simple. To the inspiration of this movement are traceable, directly or in directly, nearly all the great modern Islamic movements of Asia and Africa, for example, the *Sanusiyya*, the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* movement in India and the *Muhammadiyyah* movement in Indonesia³⁹

The religious movement known as the *Wahhābiyyah* (*Muwahhidūn*), sometimes anglicised as, “*Wahhabism*”, is founded on the teachings of Muhammed Ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhāb. Who wrote on a variety of Islamic subjects such as theology, exegesis, jurisprudence, and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). A set of issues dominated the teachings of Muhammed Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb and distinguished the *Muwahhidūn* (Unitarians) from other Islamic movements.⁴⁰

His full name Muhammed Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb bin Sulaymān bin ‘Alī bin Muhammed bin Ahmad Ibn Rāshid al- Tamīmī. He was born in 1115 A.H. (1703 C.E.) at Uyayna. Uyayna is a small town situated in Wādi-e Ḥanīfa in Southern Najd north of Riyadh, the present capital of Saudi Arabia, Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb belonged to the *Masharifa* clan of the Banū Tamīm tribe and his ancestry coalesce with that of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the first century of the Christian era. From the very beginning he was very intelligent and physically strong and alert. His uncle, Ibrāhīm Ibn Sulaymān, was both a judge and an issuer of legal opinions (*Muftī*), or *Fatāwa*, in the towns and settlements surrounding Uyayna, where⁴¹ he often was called in to settle disputes. His father, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb , was the Qāḍī of al-Uyayna and served as his first teacher of both religion and jurisprudence (*Fiqh*). Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was clearly well placed in a strong family tradition of legal

scholarship and its practical application. Thus, it is not surprising that his writings include detailed discussions of Islamic law.

The Qur'ān and *Hadīth* were particularly influential in shaping Ibn Abdul Wahhāb's understanding of the doctrine of monotheism (*Tawhīd*), both in terms of how it is to be upheld and what constitutes violation of it. The upholding of *Tawhīd* was to become the hallmark not only of Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb's teachings but also of the *Muwahhidūn* movement he inspired. *Muwahhidūns* across time and space have been both famous and infamous for their dedication to his principle and their denunciation of any and all activities that either violate it directly or could lead someone to violate it indirectly. Failure to adhere to and uphold *Tawhīd* has been blamed for the collapse of the social order, evil, Tyranny, corruption, oppression, injustice, and degeneration. Like other eighteenth century reformers, Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb taught that the remedy for such socio-political ills was simple: the revival and reform of Islam as evidenced by stricter adherence to *Tawhīd*. Only this could lead to the reestablishment of a just, stable, and powerful society.⁴²

He started the study of law on the lines of Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal under the guidance of his father, who himself was a *Hanbalī Faqīh* and *Traditionist* and at that time was the Qādī in Uyayna. Since his childhood Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb had thoroughly gone through the works of Ibn Taymiyyah and his disciple Ibn Qayyim Jawziyya and was well versed in the *Hanbalī* theology as interpreted by these two theologians. After performing the Pilgrimage he went to see the Prophet's (peace be upon him) mosque at Madinah and other holy places there. Then he visited various '*Ulama'* of that city. At that time there was present in the city a very learned person Shaykh 'Abdullah b. Ibrahim b. Ṣayf of the city of Majma. He was the head of the '*Ulama'* of Madinah. He went to Makkah and Madinah. He stayed in these cities for about two months then returned to his native town Uyayna.⁴³

After learning what he could in Madinah, Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb made his way back to Najd still in search of knowledge. He planned to visit Basra and Syria for studying further. In Basra he studied under many learned scholars. Prominent among them was Shaykh Muḥammad al- Majmu‘ī in *Basra*.⁴⁴

In Basra he learned traditions and grammar and at the same time wrote books and treatises condemning all types of innovations in which the people were engaged.

Wherever he had gone up till now, in the holy cities of Hijāz, in Najd and now in Basra, he had witnessed with disgust the involvement of the people in various innovations and going against the *Shari‘ah*. It was in Basra that he first entrusted practical significance to *Al-Amr bil-Ma‘rūf wal-Nahi ‘anil-Munkar*. Consequently the people of Basra started opposing him and also teacher Shaykh Muḥammad al-Majmu’ī.⁴⁵

Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb determined to oppose the forces of ignorance and religious malpractices among the people of Najd. He got introduced with Shaykh Muḥammad Hayat al-Sindhi (d.1165 A.H), who was a famous traditionist of the city, and apprised Shaykh al-Sindhi of his thoughts and of course he intended to adopt to reform the people of Najd. Thus, Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was placed in the category of the special pupils of Shaykh al-Sindhi. It is also said that he studied under Sulaymān al-Kurdi (d.1194 A.H).⁴⁶

He saw that religious condition of the people had deteriorated and that all the ‘Ulamā of Najd and Hijāz had agreed with the innovations and had given religious sanction to all the practices refuted by the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*, barring a small number of them who would not dare to say anything against them. He was determined to raise his voice against all this and to guide his community, which was being misled, to the right path.⁴⁷

The very core of Muḥammad bin ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s teachings was made up of a concept of *Tawhīd* and its opposite *Shirk*. He asserted that the overwhelming majority of Muslims, not only in Najd but in the whole Muslim world is misled. The reason for this he saw in the ignorance of the real meaning of *Tawhīd* as prescribed by Allah and exemplified by His Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). The consequences he drew from his definition of *Tawhīd* were that a person guilty of neglecting *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyya* and thus offending against the first religious duty was to be regarded as a *Mushrik* or polytheist and thus outside Islam, even if he verbally confessed the unity of Allah and fulfilled the other religious duties. “It is well known that the messenger of Allah summoned men to *Tawhīd* many years before he called on them to obey the pillars of Islam. And it is also well known that the message of *Tawhīd* which was brought by Jibra’īl is the most important religious duty, more important than Salāt, Zakāt, Rōza and Hajj. How is it possible that someone who rejects one of the pillars of Islam becomes an unbeliever, even if he acts in accordance

with that the Messenger of Allah taught, whereas someone who refuses to profess *Tawḥīd*, which is the religion of the messengers of Allah from Nuḥ to Muḥammad (peace be upon him), does not become an unbeliever only because he utters the formula *Lā ilāha illallah?*⁴⁸

Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb did not elaborate on a definition of *Bid‘ah* (innovation), apart from rejecting any innovation as aberration. Probably as a result of the dogmatic dispute with the movement’s adversaries, the *Muwahhidūn* (Unitarians) concept of *Bid‘ah* was put into more concrete terms by his Son ‘Abdullah. According to him, *Bid‘ah* generally is what happened after the 3rd century, a span of time including in his definition the age of the pious predecessors (*al-Salaf al-Šāliḥ*) as well as the four Imāms and their immediate disciples.⁴⁹

Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s believed and taught that religion necessarily has a public dimension because what one believes and the values to which one adheres are not and should not be limited to private life. Because human beings, both men and women, are also public figures who interact with their broader communities, their beliefs and value system, such as honesty, concern for social justice, and opposition to corruption, necessarily carry over into public behaviours. Consequently, renewal and reform of personal beliefs were intended to carry over into public behaviours and attitudes, ultimately presenting a challenge to the power of the local political and religious leaders. It was at this point, when he began to challenge the leadership of the community and ran into serious trouble.⁵⁰

Opponents of the *Muwahhidūn* movement point to the fact that Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was pushed into leaving as evidence of the “extremist” and “heretical” nature of his teachings. However, the fact that his teachings were accepted until the local authorities began to feel that their bases of power were threatened makes it clear that the issues were really about power struggles and not so much about heretical religious teachings. Other *non-Muwahhidūn* historical records conform that actual examination of *Unitarians’* texts revealed consistency with the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* so that those who bothered to read them did not find any evidence of heresy in Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s writings.⁵¹

Ultimately, Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb gave in to the ruling powers of Uyayna and left. He made the pilgrimage to Makkah and then proceeded to Madinah, where he

pushed additional studies with two of the most prominent Ḥadīth scholars of the time, the Najdī Shaykh ‘Abullah Ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn Ṣayf and the Indian Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindi. Makkah and Madinah played a special role as major centres during the eighteenth century for Ḥadīth scholarship and important international crossroads for Islamic scholars of the world. This was particularly true in the case of Indian Ḥadīth scholars like Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindi, who left behind the deteriorating Mughal Empire and its accompanying Muslim weakness to proclaim the need to recover the glorious past through a return to the fundamental sources of Islam. Thus, it was that Muḥammad ‘Abdul Wahhāb came into contact with some of the major themes of eighteenth century reform in Madinah, in large part, thanks to his teachers. He no doubt also engaged in discussion and debate with his fellow students from other parts of the Muslim world. Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s studies and encounters in Madinah had a profound impact on both his intellectual formation and his worldview.⁵²

Although it is always difficult to determine the exact degree of influence that any teacher has over any student, it is clear that Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was inspired by the key themes taught by Al-Sindi and Ibn Ṣayf: The importance of the Ḥadīth as a source of scripture, attention to the content of the Ḥadīth rather than just the chains of transmission, opposition to the imitation of past scholarships (*Taqlīd*), support for individual interpretation (*Ijtihād*), and the urgent need for socio-moral reform. Both of these important scholars were also admirers of the medieval scholar Ibn Taymiyyah. Although it is often asserted that Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was admirer and strict follower of Ibn Taymiyyah, his writings do not support this assertion. What is important is that Ibn Ṣayf and Al-Sindi included at least some of Ibn Taymiyyah’s works in their teachings and that Ibn Taymiyyah’s works therefore would have been one, though certainly not the only, component of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s studies in Madinah. Perhaps in response to the charges of some contemporaries that Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb founded a “fifth,” and therefore heretical, School of Islamic law and that he deviated significantly from the teachings of more mainstream Sunni Islam, the chronicles include two anecdotes about his interaction with his famous teachers. In the first, Ibn Ṣayf spends a day with Muḥammad ‘Abdul Wahhāb and offers him some advice about a “weapon” that will prepare him for his future encounters. When Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb expresses interest in seeing this

weapon, Ibn Ṣayf takes him to a house filled with books, which he commands him to study, making the subtle point that true change can only be brought about through knowledge and discussion, not violence.⁵³

In April 1792 (1206 A.H) Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb died at the age of about eighty nine years, i.e., after preaching his faith for nearly fifty years.⁵⁴

Works

The number of written works of ‘Abdul Wahhāb amount to about twenty or more, which include books as well as treatises. Most of his works were compiled during his more than half a century stay at Dāriyya. Some of them were written in the different centuries he visited for the purpose of learning.⁵⁵ His main works are as follows: *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd al-Ladhi Huwa Ḥaqallah ‘Ala al-‘Ibād*: This is the most important of his works and is more famous simply as ‘*Kitab al-Tawḥīd*’. This book was written by Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb while he was in Huraymala. In it he has defined *Tawḥīd* citing mostly from the *Qur’ān* and the *Hadīth* and very little of his own.⁵⁶ *Masā’il al-Jāhiliyya al-Latī Khalafa fī hā Rasūlallah ahl al-Jāhiliyya*: This book is commonly known as *Masa’l al Jāhiliyya*. In this book the ‘Abdul Wahhāb has presented the various practices of the *Jāhiliyya* period which were opposed by the Prophet (peace be upon him). Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb has discussed those entire practises which were prevalent among the pre-Islamic Arabs. Again the main source for Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb is the *Qur’ān* and the *Hadīth*. He wrote the book after observing that nearly all the people had become, once again, engaged in the same practices as in the *Jāhiliyya* days.⁵⁷ *Kitāb Faḍl al-Islam*: It explains the requirements of the faith and also condemns the innovation and polytheism. It forms part of the ‘*Majmu’i al-Hadīth al-Najdiyya*’. *Kitāb al-Kabīr*: This is one of his more famous works. It describes the various kinds of grave sins under different chapters, supported by excerpts from the *Qur’ān* and the *Hadīth*. This is also contained in the above mentioned book.⁵⁸

Doctrines of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab

The doctrines of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb , it will be seen, were not those of a new religion, though they have been described as such by several European travellers. His sole guide was *Qur’ān* and the orthodox traditions (Ahadith), and his effects were entirely directed to remove corruptions and abuses, and restore the faith

of Islam to its original purity .wherever this great reformer, when he preached to his countrymen, had any idea of establishing a new dynasty to reign over the proselytes of Arabia, is much to be doubted. But it cannot be denied that his doctrines had a favourable effect on the people, by suppressing the infidel indifferences which universally prevailed, and which have generally a more baneful effect on the morals of a nation than the decided acknowledgement even of a false religion.⁵⁹

Tawhīd is the central theme in the *Muwahhidūn* doctrines; Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb considered it the religion of Islam in itself. He maintained that the Unity of Allah reveals itself in three distinct manners.

The first is *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah*, the assertion of the Unity of Allah and his action: Allah alone is the creator, provider and disposer of the universe.

The second is *Tawhīd al-Asmā’ wa-al-Śifāt* (Unity of names and attributes), which deals with Allah’s characteristics. “Allah is the beneficent, the merciful . . . the knowledgeable. He is established on the throne, and into Him belonged whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and what so ever is between them, and whatsoever is beneath the sod.” (*Qur’ān*, 20:6).

The third aspect *Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyah*, prescribes that worship should be to Allah alone. The assertion that “there is no Allah but Allah and Muḥammad (peace be upon him) is the Prophet of Allah” means that all forms of worship should be devoted solely to Allah; The beloved Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) is not to be worshiped, but as an apostle, he should be obeyed and follow.

The *Muwahhidūn* (Unitarians) strongly disagreed with their opponents on the question of *Tawassul* (intercession). For Muḥammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb, *Ibādah* (worship) refers to all the utterances and actions- inward as well as out word- that Allah desires and commands. The common practice of seeking intercession from dead saints is prohibited, as is excessive devotion at their tombs. The doctrine of intercession led the *Muwahhidūn* to denounce vehemently the widely followed practice of visitation of tombs and the building of domes near them. Initially Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb had considered visitation, if performed in the true spirit of Islam, a pious and praiseworthy act. However, *Muwahhidūn* believe that people have transformed the prayers for the dead into prayers to the dead; grave sites became places of assembly for worshipers. The excessive veneration of the deceased

who enjoyed a holy reputation was a first step that had led people to idol-worship in the past. To avoid polytheism, the Unitarians consider it an obligation to destroy all such existing tombs. The *Muwahhidūn* also believe that mere affiliation with Islam is not sufficient in itself to prevent a Muslim from becoming a polytheist.⁶⁰

The Unitarians developed strict procedures to direct the discussion of doctrinal issues. To judge religious questions, they first search the texts of the *Qur'ān* and the *Aḥadīth* and define their views accordingly. If reference is not found in these texts, they look for the consensus of the virtuous ancestors “*Salaf-al-Ṣalih*”, particularly the Companions and their successors; *Ijmā*, however, is restricted to those who follow the *Qur'ān* and the traditions.⁶¹

The teachings of the Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb were not different from the basic teachings of Islam. He sought to restore Islam in its primitive uncorrupted purity and simplicity animated by the spirit of stern puritanism. His belief, according to Ahmad b. Ḥajr, was that of the *Salaf-al-Ṣalih* (pious ancestors), i.e., the same as that of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions,⁶² the successors of the companions, the Jurists and the traditionists such as: Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (R.A.), Imām Mālik (R.A.), Imām Shafi‘ī (R.A.), Ahmad b. Ḥanbal (R.A.), Sufiyān Thawrī, Ibn Mubarak (R.A.), Imām Bukhārī etc. In returning to the ways of the pious ancestors, he places great emphasis on the texts of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*.

The doctrines of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb were not those of a new religion; his efforts were directed only to reform abuses in the followers of Islam, and to disseminate the pure faith among Bedouins; who, although nominally Muslims, were equally ignorant of religion, as indifferent about all the duties which it prescribed. As generally has been the case with reformers, he was misunderstood both by his friends and enemies. The later hearing of a new sect, which accused the Turks of heresy, and held their Prophet, Muḥammad (peace and blessing be upon him), in much less veneration than they did, were easily persuaded that a new creed was professed, and that the Unitarians were consequently not merely heretics but *Kāfirs* or infidels.

Actually this movement has been termed as a ‘strictly puritan reformation’, whose aim was the reform of abuses, the abolition of superstitious practices, and a return to primitive Islam. All later accretions- the writings and interpretations of the

medieval theologians, ceremonial or mystical innovations, saint worship, in fact every sort of change was condemned.⁶³

Innovation (*Bid'ah*) is another concern of *Muwahhidūn*. It is defined as any doctrine or action not based on the *Qur'ān*, the tradition, or the authority of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) Companions. Muḥammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb condemned all forms of innovation and rejected the views of those who maintained that an innovation could be good or praiseworthy. He invoked the authority of the *Qur'ān* and the traditions of Muḥammad to support his views. The Unitarians rejected as *Bid'ah* such acts as celebrating the Prophet's (peace be upon him) birthday, seeking intercession from saints, reciting the *Fātiha* on behalf of the founders of Sufi orders after the five daily prayers, and repeating the five daily prayers after the final Friday prayer in the month of Ramadan.⁶⁴

The conflict of *Ijtihād* and *Taqlīd* is the six principle concern. According to Muḥammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhāb and his followers, Allah commanded people to obey him alone and to follow the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him). This complete adherence to the *Qur'ān* and the traditions, that Wahhabis demanded of Muslims, also entailed a rejection of all interpretations offered by the four Schools of Islamic jurisprudence-including the *Muwahhidūn*'s own Ḥanbalī School where it is not in accordance with the two prime sources.⁶⁵ Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb vehemently condemned *Taqlīd*. Although he himself was a follower of Ḥanbalite School of *Fiqh*, yet he did not follow it rigidly. In his book *Hadiyya al-Thāniyya*, he makes a frank confession of this. "Ibn Qayyim and his illustrious teacher Ibn Taymiyyah were both righteous leaders according to the Sunni school of thought and their writings are dear to my heart, but I do not follow them rigidly in all matters."⁶⁶

Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb was especially critical of *Bid'ah* (innovations) i.e. all those practices which had crept in since the early centuries of Islam. Among the various practices considered as *Bid'ah* by the Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb is *Tawassul* (intercession). He has divided it into two types first, to which he gave his sanction and approval, is that by which Allah is approached by the good deeds of oneself, and the second type is that by which man intercedes through other pious men. It was this second type of intercession which Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb vehemently condemned. He considered it sinful to invoke the intercession of departed saints or to honour their mortal remains more than those of any other person. He did

not approve of interceding through any Prophet or *Walī* (saint). At the same time Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb believed that the real meaning of *Tawhīd* is not to seek help from anyone except Allah. To him it was allowable to ask of Allah for the sake of a saint but not to pray to the Saint, and this applied also to Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him).⁶⁷

Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb’s time was that the Muslims were engaged in undesirable practices which give the impression of *Shirk* (polytheism), the association of persons and things with Allah, who, has no associated. ‘In combating this, he exalted the doctrine of *Tawhīd*. Wahhābī literature expounds at length the two principal aspects of *Tawhīd*, Allah’s uniqueness as Omnipotent Lord of creation (*Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah*) and his⁶⁸ uniqueness in deserving worship and the absolute devotion of his servants (*Tawhīd al-Ulūhiyya*)’. The chief aspect of the Ibn Wahhāb ’s teaching was the absolute incomparability of Allah. Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb declared that ‘Islam is not only form of words, an imitation of what others have said ; at the day of judgement it will not be enough to plead that I heard people saying something and I said it too’. It is our duty to find out what true Islam is; it is, above all, a rejection of all gods except Allah, a refusal to allow others to share in that worship which is due to Allah alone. When it is evident that worship is due to Allah alone, then to associate anyone in that worship is *Shirk*. *Shirk* is evil, no matter what the object is, it may be ‘King or Prophet, or Sufi Saint or tree or tomb.⁶⁹ To call and seek help from other than Allah is defined by the Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab as ‘Grave *Shirk*’ (*Shirk al-Akbar*). Ibn Wahhab further says that no one is more misguided than the one who calls other than Allah, and the person called will have enmity with the caller on the day of judgement. ‘Abdul Wahhāb defines hypocrisy as a ‘Small *Shirk*’ (*Shirk al-Asghar*) and says that the pious men are more prone to hypocrisy. A hypocrite, he says, is one who ostensibly prays for the sake of Allah but his real motive is to show piety.⁷⁰

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CHAPTER- THREE

THE ADVENT AND SPREAD OF ISLAM IN INDIA

Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) completely changed the intellectual outlook of the people. He (peace be upon him) was born in 571 C.E. in a noble and respectable Quraysh family of Makkah, who traced their descent from Ḥadrat Ismā‘īl (peace be on him), the son of Ḥadrat Ibrāhīm (peace be on him), who flourished some two thousand years before the Christian era.

On the demise of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) the expansion of Islam was not stopped. His followers and successors inspired by the doctrine of Islam and carried the banner of Islam to the different parts of the world. They soon became the master of a vast empire comprising Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Persia.¹

After the conquest of Persia, the Muslims turned their attention to the east. The Arabs were famous for their trade and they had been coming as traders since pre-Islamic times to the territories of the eastern coast. So it was natural for India, a land of fabulous wealth to attract the notice of the Sons of the desert. During the *Khilāfat* of Ḥadrat ‘Umar (R.A.), the Muslims warriors made an abortive attempt to enter India. In consideration of the dangers and difficulties involved in distant adventures, the *Khalīfa* stopped further expeditions. During the *Khilāfat* of ‘Alī (R.A.) and Mu‘āwiyya, several expeditions were undertaken none of which resulted in a permanent success. The arms of the Muslims remained in active for the next few years. But with the coming of the Umayyad *Khalīfa*, Al-Walīd to power, there opened a new chapter in the history of Islam. His famous general, Musā Ibn Nusayr subjugated the whole of North Africa while his lieutenant, Tāriq conquered Spain. In the east Qutaybah carried the banner of Islam far into Central Asia. It was at that time circumstances led the Muslims to the Conquest of Sind² in the eighth century by Muḥammad bin Qāsim.³ He was a born leader and a man of versatile genius. He was a poet, a patriot, a statesman and an accomplished administrator. ‘His tender age, impressive figure, his dauntless courage and noble bravery, his brilliant victories in battles and wise method of administration and lastly, his sudden and tragic end make the story of his short and illustrious life one of the romances of history. He was

strongly against opponents and tender –hearted to his friends. “Muhammad bin Qāsim was one of the great men of all times.”⁴ Muslims made their settlements in three towns along the south Indian coast and in Ceylon. The Muslim Arabs first settled on the Malabar Coast about the end of the seventh century.⁵

The Muslim army marched to Al-Nirun (modern Hyderabad) where Raja Dāhir the king of *Sind* was defeated and killed and the city was captured. There after other cities in Sind were occupied. After consolidating the Muslim Rule in *Sind*, the Muslim army crossed over the *Punjab* and conquered *Multan* in 713 C.E. in the north, a Muslim army under ‘Abdur Rahmān b. Muḥammad invaded *Kabul*. In the *South*, a Muslim army under Muḥammad bin Qāsim invaded *Sind*.⁶

The conquest of Sind by Muḥammad bin Qāsim, and the incorporation of that province into the Muslim universal *Caliphate*, brought the Hindus and Muslims in a relationship of a very different nature , a form of political relationship, which some centuries later extended to the whole of *sub-continent*.⁷

Islam quickly spread in many parts of the world and the Islamic empire included in its orbit men of various tribes and nationalities. It spread in Western Central Asia, Africa, Spain, India and other parts of the world; it is sometimes supposed that the spread of Islam in India was due to force employed by the conquerors. This view is not correct for there are no instances in history of whole sole persecutions of non-Muslims.⁸

A study of Islam in India in the eighteenth century is inextricably entwined with two strands, both of which are of primary importance. Great controversies, ideological and sectarian, whether over pantheism or Imamate, that shook other parts of the Islamic world, in due course, extended to India. On the other hand the entire question of co-existence of Islam with Hinduism presented a unique feature hardly paralleled in any other part of the world. Islam in India was particularly affected by successive waves of ideas and practices of Sufi thought from the Islamic world.⁹

The earliest Muslims who came to India were traders who reached the coast of Malabar attracted by the profits of trade. The tolerant policy pursued by the Hindu Rajas both on the eastern and western coasts facilitated their task. After the invasions of Maḥmūd of Ghaznī quite a stream of Muslim missionaries passed into India. Nūruddīn known as Nūr Saudagar came to Gujarat during the reign of Siddha Rājā

(1094-1193 C.E.) and converted to Islam such castes as the *Koris*, *Kunbis* and *Karwas*. In the thirteenth century Sayyid Jalāluddīn of Bukhara (1190-1291 C.E.) settled in Uch and Sind and succeeded in gaining many converts. The most famous of all was Khwāja Muīnuddīn Chishtī of Ajmer at whose influence, Islam spread over a wide area in Rajputana and other parts of India. The Sufi Saints of Islam¹⁰ lived among the people and attracted by their piety and spirituality many Hindus after conversion also became their disciples. The pantheistic doctrines of most of the Sufi mystics of India appealed much to the Indian mind and they soon gathered a large following around them. The most famous order was the *Chishtiyyah* which included such men as (Khwājas) Muīnuddīn Chishtī, Farīduddīn Shakarganj of Pakpatan, Nizāmuddīn Awliyā of Delhi and Naṣīruddīn Chiragh Delhi and Shaykh Salīm Chishtī of Fatehpur Sikri. These Saints exercised a profound influence on the state and society of their time and their teachings were appreciated by ‘Hindus and Muslims a like. The other notable orders were the *Suhrawardī*, the *Shattārī*, the *Qādirī* and the *Naqshbandī* which tried to spread the light of the faith among the people in whose midst they lived. Great success was achieved by Sufi Saints in Bengal but in Northern India orthodox Brahmanism made the progress of Islamic missionary activities slow and difficult. To the down-trodden of Hindu Society in Bengal, Islam came as a message of hope and deliverance from the tyranny of the higher castes.¹¹

The five daily prayers enjoined upon all Muslims by the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him) constitute a bond of unity which keeps them together and makes them feel as brethren. A person embracing Islam enters a brotherhood which knows no distinctions. Daily contact with Muslims must have brought about a change in outlook and perhaps a great many found no difficulty in changing their religion. It is quite true that these causes operated to spread the faith of Islam in India.¹² These found a ready welcome in Islam which permits the *Sweeper* and the *Prince* to worship together without any distinctions of rank and wealth. The most powerful attraction of Islam in India has been its brotherhood which recognized the equality of all its members.

The contact of Hinduism, all other faiths and Islam in this country has produced far-reaching consequences. It has led to a new synthesis of cultures and

faiths. It has influenced the manners, habits and speech of many a great people inhabiting the Northern India.¹³

It is true to say that Islam came to India through the Arab merchants, Sufi Saints and political conquerors. Leaving aside the earlier *Arab* invasion of *Sind* which, although not entirely devoid of results, entered on the western borders of India, the political conquerors of India were not *Arabs*, but newly converts. So the Islam which came to India was not only already conditioned by *non-Arab* influences but, what is more, it was confronted in India by a well-established civilization distinctly opposite and much older. After the dust of campaigns had settled down the mutual process of inter influencing began to take effect. While it is difficult to draw an exact balance sheet of this process of give and take it is evident that Islam in India was considerably influenced by its new environment.¹⁴

They fused their Islamic doctrine with the culture and philosophy of India and evolved a new line of advance, which brought in hundreds and thousands of non-Muslims especially of the depressed orders, whose social status was such that they looked on the new faith as a great blessing from Heaven.

Summing up the following appears to be the more important causes for the spread of Islam in India.

- The prevalent caste system which, though organized with the best of intentions, had degenerated and had become unbearable to the low castes. By adopting Islam, a member of the lowest caste became entitled to equal status with those belonging to the ruling classes. He could intermarry and could expect promotion to the highest temporal and spiritual ranks in the community.
- Economic condition of the masses.
- Ignorance of their religion on the part of the masses.
- Occasional persecution of non-Muslims by nobles, generals and rulers.
- Encouragement given by the granting of appointments and offices or the remission of punishments.
- Missionary activity on the part of Sufi thinkers.¹⁵

Causes of Conversion and Reversion

In the peaceful work of traders and missionaries, there were several other factors that helped the Spread of Islam in India. The reversion to Islam of over one-fourth of the Sub-continent's population is due to a number of causes. To begin with, Islam Spread more rapidly in those areas where *Buddhism* had lingered on until the time of its arrival, as in some north-western and eastern parts of the peninsula. On the Indian coasts proselytization by Muslim traders and settlers was not regarded as a serious challenge by the Hindu Rājās, who imposed no restrictions on reversions to Islam which were in those areas. Brahmanical Hinduism offered a much more solid resistance to the spread of Islam.¹⁶

Message of Islam Imparted by Muḥammad bin Qāsim

After having conquered the capital of *Sind* in 93 *Hijrah*, the commander, Muḥammad bin Qāsim, sent message to lords, rulers, ministers and dignitaries and even to general public inviting them to embrace Islam. He succeeded in making many leaders and large communities of native Sind, particularly the Buddhists enter into Islam, thanks to the just teachings of Islam and the humane qualities of that young commander whom Allah glorified despite his young age by selecting for the spread of Islam. It is certain that the majority of them embraced Islam after thorough scrutiny of it and due to a deep conviction. Because, they found in Islam and in Arabs, admirable qualities, and wanted to embrace this right religion, to live like Arab free in their religion, honored in their life. These people compared the teachings of Islam with the teachings of their earlier faiths from social, moral and economic points of view and found in Islam sublime values and just provision for the wellbeing of the humanity, apart from Islam's call to worship of Allah. All this inspired them to embrace Islam on their own accord, as had happened, earlier, in other countries.¹⁷

In *Siostan* (city of Sind), a great part of *Sind*, a delegation of people of “*Channah*” came, and offered allegiance to Arabs. After a while, all of these people embraced Islam. They were formerly Buddhists. They are considered the first large group of Buddhists who embraced Islam during the days of victories, after having studied the teachings of Islam.¹⁸

Sufi Movement in India

The early history of Sufi Movement in India is most obscure but we may safely assume that Muslims with strong leaning towards Sufi thought were working in this country from the time of Islam's earliest contact with it. Historians tell us that it was by way of three open doors- the sea, the land route leading Persia into Sind, and Khyber pass- that Islam entered India. Through these same doors there also must have come Sufis and wandering *Darwishes*, following the steps of peaceful Arab traders and military commanders.¹⁹

The writings of Muslim historians and Arab travellers show that Islam first appeared early in South India, on the Malabar coast, chiefly through the influence of Arab traders, who in most cases were also preachers of their new faith. Other channels of influence in those early days were Sufi Saints, who, as ever, were noted for their wandering life²⁰

Through India's second gateway- which leads from Mesopotamia and South Persia through Baluchistan, south of the mountains of Makran into Sind- Islam made very early contact with India. But no Muslim colony resulted through the entrance made by this gateway until Sind was invaded by Muhammad bin Qāsim.

The third- the Khyber pass- through which Turk, Mongol and Afghan forces entered into India, proved to be the main entrance for Muslim ascetics and wandering *Darwishes*.

Thus, long before the Muslim occupation of any part of this country, Islam came into contact with Indian thought, and was, to some extent, definitely influenced by it, especially in its Sufi doctrines and practices.²¹

Early History of Sufi Movement in India:

Muslim Sufi Saints of Arabia Persia and Central Asia arrived India in the very early Parts of History. They followed the Muslim Conquerors and traders and started their missionary work of Propagating Islam among the Indian masses. In the beginning these Sufi Saints had their individual identities and were not organized into various Sufi orders. They were responsible for converting a large number of Indian non-Muslims to Islam.

Mappillas of the South Coast were reverted to Islam by the disciples of Mālik bin Dinār (d. 744), *Dudwalas* and *Pinjaras* of Gujrat by Al-Hallāj (d. 921), *Labbes* of Trichinopoly by Nīthār Shāh (d. 1039), *Memons* of Kuchh by Yūsuf al- dīn-Sindi, the *Daudpotas* of Sind and Baluchistan by the Qaramite missionaries of Sind, the *Bohras* of Gujrat by Ismā‘ilī missionaries like Nūr Saudagar. The tomb of Imām Naṣīruddīn at Jullundur bears the year of his death as 945 C.E. Similarly a tomb of another Sufi named at Khadar reported to be existing in Dacca. Al-Khadar died in 951 C.E., In 975 C.E. Abu Ishāq of Gazrūn appointed Ṣaif ud-dīn Gazrūnī (962-1007), a young boy of seventeen year as his *Khalīfah* and asked him to go to India for the spread of his own creed. He came to Ismā‘ilī Kingdom of Multan and settled at Uch. He remained there till his death in 1007 C.E. Another Sufi was Sayyid Ismā‘il, who belonged to a noble Sayyid family of Bukhara. He reached India about the year 1005 C.E. and settled at Lahore under Hindu rule. Shāh Sultān Rūmī reached India in the Second half of the eleventh century, and settled in Bengal with his religious preceptor Sayyid Shāh Surkh in the year 445 A.H/ 1053 C.E. (and Old Persian document, executed in the year 1082. A.H./1671 C.E. has revealed the name of Shāh Sultān Rūmī.) this Sufi Saint with his wonderful miraculous power, baffled the Raja on his plots, who afterwards was obligated to accept Islam and dedicate the whole village to the revered memory of the Sufi Saint and his future spiritual successors. Another important early Sufi Saint was Shaykh ‘Alī bin ‘Uthmān al-Hujwīrī commonly known as *Dātā Ganj Bakhsh Lahori*, the celebrated author of *Kashful Maḥjūb*, who, after visiting many Muslim counties reached India in the latter part of his life and settled at Lahore where he died in 465 A.H/1072 C.E. Al-Hujwīrī is reported to have converted Raia Raju a Hindu general of the Ghazanawids to Islam. Yūsuf Gardezī worked in Multan and died there in 1152. C.E. some other early Sufis in India were, Mīr Husayn Zanjārī, Ahmad Tokhata Lahori (d. 1205 C.E.), Ya‘qūb Ṣadar Dīwān Lahori (d. 1208 C.E.), and ‘Azīzuddīn Makkī Lahori (d. 1215 C.E.), Sayyid Ahmad Iliyās *Lakhi Dātā* or *Sakhī Sarwar* of Multan, died in 1181 C.E. at Shahkot near Multan, Bābā Ādam Shahīd reached India and settled in Bengal in the reign of Raja Balla Sena, with whom he fought for the cause of Islam and courted martyrdom in 1119 C.E. He was buried in a village ‘Abdullah Pur in Bikrampur, Dacca.²²

The early Sufi Saints who came to India and permanently settled here had lived with the common people and propagated the laws of Islam. It is largely due to

their missionary zeal that Islam in the early centuries in India had flourished with great success.

It is true to say that since 13th century C.E. Sufis started organizing themselves into various orders like *Chishtiyyah*, *Suhrawrdiyyah*, *Qādiriyah* and *Naqshbandiyyah* etc. a brief history of the said orders is discussed below:

In India Sufi Saints were regarded as responsible for the spiritual welfare of the people; and considered them entrusted with spiritual government, parallel to the political government exercised by the sultans and their *Amirs*. The two dominant *Sufi Silsilas* (orders) under the sultanate were the *Chishtī* and the *Suhrawardī*, both of these declined during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Two other orders raised in prominence during the *Mughal* period, the *Naqshbandī* and *Qādirī*.

The Sufis claim that their doctrines are derived solely from the Qur'ān and the Traditions, but a closer examination of Sufi thought reveals that several extraneous influences have also been probably at work in its development.²³

This led to a chequered pattern of relationships between the Sufis and the Sultans and made the former suspect under the Khaljīs. Matters came to a head under the Tughluqs when Muḥammad Ibn- Tughluq humiliated and dispersed the Chishtī Sufis. Under the Sultanate there was also considerable rivalry between the 'Ulamā and the Sufis, focussed most often on the question of listening to *music (Sama)*. The attitude of the former changed in the seventeenth century when there was a reconciliation of the religious *law* (*sharī'ah*) and the mystic path (*Tariqah*) the traditionist, Shaykh 'Abdul-Haq Dihlawī, had been initiated into several mystic orders; and Mullah Nizamuddīn, the compiler of the famous *Nizāmiyah* syllabus, had for his preceptor, 'Abdur Razzāq of Bansā, a mystic who was inferior to him in scholarship.²⁴

The Four Main Sufis Orders

Of all Sufi orders only four, viz. the *Chishtiyyah*, the *Qādiriyah*, the *Suhrawardiyya* and the *Naqshbandiyya*, established in India as orders of sufficient importance.²⁵

Chishtiyyah Order: Some Chishtīs trace their origin to Ḥasan al-Basrī. Actually the order derives its name from *Chisht*, a village near Herat where the founder of the order, Khwāja Abu-Ishāq resided for some time in the twelfth century. It was

introduced into India by Khwāja Mu‘īnuddīn Sanjarī (d.1236), who was a disciple of Khwāja ‘Uthmān Harwanī and is claimed to have met the founders of the *Qādirī*, the *Kubrawī* and the *Suhrawardī* orders during his extensive wanderings. He arrived in India shortly before the conquests of Muḥammad Ibn-Sam Ghuri and chose Ajmer, in the very heart of war-like Hindu Rajput territory, as the location for his hospice. On the whole he was tolerated there, but it is probable that his missionary activity flourished only after the Muslim conquest. Two other *Chishtī* centres were established by his disciples; at Delhi by Khwāja Qutubuddīn Bakhtiyar Kākī (d.1236) and at Nagor by Ḥamīduddīn. The former was closer to Islamic culture in general, while the latter adopted itself to some extent to rural Hindu ways of life, including vegetarianism. Another centre, with an austere ascetic discipline, was established at Ajodhan by Kākī’s disciple, Farīduddīn, hagiographically known as *Ganj-i-Shakar* (1175-1265 C.E.) One of his disciples, ‘Alī Ibn-Āḥmad Ṣabir, founded the *Sābirīyyah* Sub-Order.²⁶

The *Chishtī* order believed in the doctrine of ontological monism (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) which explains the influence on it of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s almost pantheistic ideas. Its mystical practices were the same as those of other orders, and included liturgy (*Dhikr*), regulation of the breath, which was probably an Indian influence, concentrated séance (*Murāqaba*) and an Indian practice, namely, secluded worship (*Chilla*) for forty days.²⁷

Suhrawrdīyah Order: The *Suhrawrdīyah* order was founded by Shaykh Najībuddīn-‘Abd-al-Qāhir Suhrawardī (d.1169), and developed by his nephew, Shihābuddīn Suhrawardī (d.1234), in Iraq. A number of his disciples took refuge in India from disturbed conditions in Persia and Iraq, and one of them, an Indian, Bahāuddīn Zakariyya, established the order in Multan in the thirteenth century. Another, Jalāluddin Tabrīzī introduced the order in Bengal.

The Uch branch of the *Suhrawardī* order was organized by Sayyid Jalāluddīn Bukhārī, generally known as *Makhdūm-i-Jahāniyan*, who combined other-worldliness and good relations with the Tughluq Sultans.²⁸

The Indian *Suhrawardīs* were staunch *Hanafis* and stressed on the importance of ritual prayers.²⁹

Qādiriyah Order: This order, the most widespread in the subcontinent in modern times, was found in Iraq by a Ḥanbalī mystic, Shaykh ‘Abd-al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (1077-1166 C.E). It was first introduced into India by Muḥammad Ghawth, who established a hospice at Uch in 1482. The *Qādirīs* were generally tolerant of the non-Muslims, and this attitude must have been one of the formative influences on the syncretistic thinking of Dārā Shikōh. The order suffered a temporary eclipse under Aurangzeb, but it remained on the whole the most popular. Indian Muslims hold its founder, Shaykh al-Jīlānī al-Baghdādī, in great esteem and, because of his tomb, regard Baghdad as one of their holy cities. The order adheres strictly to the tenets of *Sharī‘ah*.³⁰

Naqshbandiyya Order: The *Naqshbandī* is the most outstanding of the Sufi Orders in India. It originated in Central Asia and was at the beginning influenced by the certain Mahayana Buddhist features although it was a Sunni movement aiming at the integration of external ritual with inner spirituality. Its foundation is attributed to Khwāja ‘Ábdul Khāliq Gajdwānī. It was developed by Bahāuddīn. Apocryphally it traced its discipline through Abū Yazīd Bistāmī to the first orthodox Caliph, Ḥaḍrat Abū-Bakr (R.A.). The *Naqshbandī* received the patronage of Bābur, which may have helped the establishment of the order in India by Muḥammad Bāqī Billah (1563-1603) and fully developed by the great Indian *Naqshbandī* mystic, Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, in the seventeenth century.³¹

In the fourteenth century India it can be found that the *Chishtiyyah* order was represented by its branches under the name of *Nizāmiyyah* and *Sābirīyyah*, and both these sub-orders had a number of saintly men known for their spirituality and piety. Yet, of a fact, the century belonged to the *Shattāriyyah* order which could be deemed to have taken charge of the spirituality realm from the *Chishtiyyahs* and won over the whole Country.³²

This was the religious and spiritual atmosphere prevailing in the World of Islam, particularly in India, where mystic guides belonging to different Sufi orders and with varying levels of spiritual attainments had established their own centers of spiritual guidance for the people. The commonality as well as the elite which were deeply religious usually attached themselves to one or the other of these teachers of spiritual truth.³³

Beginning of the Propagation of Islam in the Southern Coasts of India by Arab Traders

It is true to say that, the propagation of Islam in the Indian sub-continent, started along the South-Indian coasts, through Arab traders in early *Hijrah* years. Later, it was propagated in Sind during the conquests by Muslim Arabs.

Islam made a considerable impact on the social life of the Arabs. Trade relations between Arabs and natives of South-Indian coasts existed since centuries before Islam. Arab families and communities lived on these coasts and practiced trade between Arab countries and India.³⁴

The Arabs of those regions, after having entered in Islam, and their intellectual, social and economic conditions have also been changed, started paying great attention to the religious aspects of Islam.³⁵ In the 5th century *Hijrah*, it became easy to educate Muslims and bring large number of non-Muslims into the fold of Islam. Thus, the service rendered by these Arab traders and Arab communities should be viewed as one of the greatest boon to those who were blessed by the light of Islam.³⁶

The Spread of Islam in South India

All through this period the north was the leader in culture, for there all the scriptures were written, and most of the heterodox faiths, Buddhism and Jainism, philosophical schools and sects arose. But after the eighth century a change occurred; the north lost its leadership and the initiative passed to the south. It was there in the south that Islam first came into contact with Hinduism and leavened the growing mass of Hindu thought.³⁷

The first advent of Islam in south India dates as far back as the eighth century, when a band of refugees, to whom the *Mappillas* trace their descent, came from ‘*Iraq*’ and settled in the century. The trade in spices, ivory, gems, etc. between India and Europe, which for many hundred years was conducted by the Arabs and Persians, caused a continual stream of Muhammadan influence to flow in upon the west coast of southern India. Along with the things and constant influx of foreigners, there resulted a mixed population, half Hindu and half Arab or Persian, in the trading centres along the coast. Very friendly relations appear to have existed between these Muslim traders and the Hindu rulers, who extended to

them their protection and patronage in consideration of the increased commercial activity and consequent prosperity of the country, and no obstacles were placed in the way of proselytising.³⁸

It was during this period of strenuous activity that the foundations of later religious development in the south were laid. The Siva and Vaisnava saints combined to wean the people from their allegiance to Buddhism and Jainism to worship *Siva* and *Vishnu*. They sought to attain their aim by making an appeal to the happiness of dwelling in the presence of god and of seeking of his grace. Their poems were all in the language of the people, and in this as in other matters they were indebted deeply to the religions which they attempted to supplant. For they took over from Buddhism its ‘devotionalism’ its sense of the transitoriness of the world, its conceptions of human worthlessness, its suppression of desires and asceticism as also its rituals, the worship of idols and lingams, temples, pilgrimages, fasts and monastic rules and its idea of the spiritual equality of all castes; from Jainism they took its ethical tone and its respect for animal life.³⁹

The distance which the Indian mind has travelled from the sober moderate, contemplative emotionalism of the north and the fervent ardour and explosive passion of the religion of Bhakti, of the south, is great.⁴⁰

It is necessary to repeat that most of the elements in the southern Schools of devotion and philosophy, taken singly, were derived from ancient systems; but the elements in their totality and in their peculiar emphasis betray a singular approximation to the Muslim faith and therefore make the arguments for Islamic influence probable.⁴¹ The parallels between the Indian systems developed in the south by Sankara and his successors and the schools of Muslim theology and mysticism are startling in their similitudes. Both systems of thought appear to have undergone an evolution which ran on similar lines. The Indian mind starting with suit and the Muslim with the Qur’ān, both enjoining a religion of action, passed the stage of rationalisation to devotional and emotional religion.⁴²

The traditional account of the introduction of Islam into Malabar, as given by historians of the sixteenth century, represents the first missionaries to have been a party of pilgrims on their way to visit the foot-prints of Prophet Ādam in Ceylon; on their arrival at Kranganore the Raja sent for them and the

leader of the party, Shaykh Sharaf b Malik, and his nephew, Mālik bin Ḥabīb , took the opportunity of expounding to him the faith of Islam and the mission of Prophet, (peace be upon him) “and God caused the truth of the Prophet’s teaching to enter into the king ‘s heart and he believed therein ; and his heart became filled with love for the Prophet’s Companions [and told them to] come back to him again on their return from their Pilgrimage to Adam ‘s foot-print.”⁴³

Muslims in southern India, ascribe their conversion to the preaching of missionaries whose tombs are held in veneration by them to the present day. The most famous of these was Sayyid Nithār Shāh (A.D.969-1039) who after many wanderings in Arabia, Persia and northern India, settled down in Trichinopoly, where he spent the remaining years of his life in prayer and works of charity, and converted a large number of Hindus to the faith of Islam; his tomb is much resorted to as a place of Pilgrimage and the Muslims renamed Trichinopoly as Nitharnagar, after the name of their Sufi Saint. Sayyid Ibrāhīm Shahīd (said to have been born about the middle of the twelfth century), whose tomb is at Ervadi, was a militant hero who led an expedition into the Pandyan kingdom, occupied the country for about twelve years, but was at length slain; his son’s life was, however, spared in consideration of the beneficent rule of his father, and a grant of land given to him, which his descendants enjoy till the present day. The latest of these Sufi Saints, Shāh al-Hamid (1532-1600), who was born at Manipur in northern India, and spent most of his life in visiting the holy shrines of Islam and in missionary tours chiefly throughout southern India; he finally settled in Nagore, where the descendants of his adopted son are still in charge of his tomb.⁴⁴

It was most probably from Malabar that Islam crossed over to the Laccadive and Maldives islands, the population of which is now entirely Muslim. The inhabitants of these islands owed their conversion to the Arab and Persian merchants, who established themselves in the country, intermarrying with the natives, and thus smoothing the way for the work of active proselytising. The date of conversion of the first Muslim Sultan of the Maldives Islands, Ahmad Shanurazah, has been conjectured to have occurred about A.D. 1200, but is very possible that the Muslim merchants had introduced their religion into the Island as much undoubtedly have been a gradual one.

Certain other characteristics of south Indian thought from the ninth century onwards, however, strongly point to Islamic influence. There are the increasing emphasis on monotheism, emotional worship, self-surrender (*prapatti*) and adoration of the teacher (*guru bhakti*) and in addition to them laxity in the rigours of the caste system, and indifference to mere ritual words.⁴⁵

Introduction of Islam into the neighbouring *Laccadive Islands* is attributed to an Arab preacher ; known to the islanders by the name of Mumba Mulyaka ; his tomb is still shown at and Roth and as the present Qādī of that place claims to be twenty-six in Descent from him, he probably reached these islands sometime in the twelfth century.⁴⁶

The appearance of new ideas and the emphasizing of certain old ones in southern India from the ninth to the fourteenth century are rather peculiar. Such things did not happen in the north, for all, the early medieval reformers belonged to the south. If one of the reasons was not the influence of Islam, steadily and increasingly exerted during this very period and in this very region till it was suddenly eliminated by the advent of the Europeans, it would be difficult to account for the phenomenon, still more so considering that the reforming shears were applied to the very parts anathematised by Islam, and that the new acquisitions were the very features which most prominently marked that religion.⁴⁷

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CHAPTER - FOUR

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS OF THE MUSLIMS SINCE THE ADVENT OF ISLAM IN INDIA

Action and reaction between Islam and Hinduism continued all through the period of Muslim rule in India, accelerated, on occasions by the ‘liberalism’ of some Muslim rulers, until, in the early nineteenth century, Islam in India presented so corrupt a picture as to occasion revivalist and reactionary movements.

In few other countries the Muslims had embodied so many ‘*infidel*’ rites and customs in their own creed as in India particularly it was true of Bengal and Bihar, where the Muslims were numerous but were corrupt and irreligious practices gained considerable ground. The alteration which Islam had undergone in adapting itself to an indigenous situation is a striking one. The change is manifested in certainties rites and customs which had imperceptibly grown out of long contacts with non-Muslims, but which were often at variance with the *Pīr* it of the Qur’ān. The numerous pilgrimages to the tombs of the holy personages, some of whom were not even Muslims, the semi-pagan festivals instituted in honour of such personages, the pomp and grandeur which invariably crept into Muslim social functions along with pagan rites, exemplify this trend.¹

This change is attributed by some to the great simplicity of Islam for a country like India, where an idolatrous and allegorical religion, appealing to the senses and imagination rather than to the mind and heart, was prevalent.² Two simple *Ids* of the Muslims were not enough for a country accustomed to a multiplicity of Hindu festivals. New ones were, therefore, instituted or borrowed from Hinduism as for instance the solemn observances consecrated to the memory of the *Pīrs* of Sufi Saints “who are to the Muslims of India what the *devtas* (gods) are to the Hindus”.³

But, perhaps, contact with alien races, each having a peculiar culture of its own, isolation from the cradle of Islam and the smallness of numbers in the midst of an alien population, tended in the case of the Muslims to produce greater liberality of feeling and more sympathy for the sentiments and religious observances of those around them. The local *gods*, whom men bow their head after in times of trouble and sickness, were too near and dear to the innermost heart of the Hindu converts to be

abolished without substitutes. “It was much easier to give them an *anthropomorphous* form and to replace them by Sufi Saints endowed with equal powers and with Pīr its of easy access to the worshippers”.⁴

This Pīr it of concession, the outcome of circumstances, was accelerated by the personal ‘liberalism’ of some of the later Muslim rulers. Akbar paid adoration to sun and fire and on the full moon of *Sha’ban* employed Brahmins to fasten ‘Rākhi’ on his wrist.⁵ He cultivated matrimonial relationship with the great Hindu houses of India, and this example was followed later by other Muslim rulers whose wives undoubtedly brought with them their beliefs and manners, interfered in most cases, to their new homes, to accelerate the process of corruption.⁶ Akbar’s son Jahangir observed *Diwali Puja*, invited *Yogis* to dine with him during *Sivaratri* and in the eighth year of reign, celebrated his father’s *Sraddha* in the Mausoleum at Sikandra.⁷ Dārā Shikōh, the eldest son of Shāh Jahān, composed a work called *Majmu al-Bahrayn* or the meeting of the two seas, having for its object the union of Hindu and Muslim religious systems.

By the middle of the eighteenth century this process of assimilation, in Bengal and Bihar particularly, had greatly advanced. Shahamat Jang and Sawat Jang (nephews of ‘Alīwardī) once celebrated the *Holi* festival for seven days in the garden of Motijhil, where coloured water and heaps of ‘Abira (red powder) and saffron had been prepared for the festivities. After the treaty of Ali Nagar, Nawāb Sirāj al- Dawla went to Murshidabad and enjoyed the *Holi* festival in the place of Mansurganj. Nawāb Mīr Ja‘far crossed the Ganges with all the gentry of the town and in similar manner took part in the *Holi* festival. It is also said on reliable authority, that on his death bed, Mīr Ja‘far drank a few drops of water poured in libation over the idol of *Krittesvari*.⁸

Incomplete conversion is still another channel through which un-Islamic practices passed into Indian Islam. Mixed practices and beliefs, in the rural areas especially, may, to a great extent, be accounted for this. The burning of Muslim widows and inter-marriage with the Hindus was practised in some parts of the India during the reign of Jahangir. The worship of the Hindu shrine, Manohara Natha “by as many Muslim as Hindu pilgrims” was found to be common by Sleeman in 1836 C.E. the actual worship of smallpox, under the name Devi Mata in the Punjab and Sitala in other parts of India among the lower orders of Muslims seems to have been one of the outrageous practices that persisted in the nineteenth century, doubtless as a result of

incomplete conversion. As late as 1911 C.E., the Census report refers to communities, the members of which admitted that “they were neither Hindus nor Muslims but a mixture of both”

The *Karta Bhajas* a sect founded in Bengal in the eighteenth century, who called their creed *Satya-Dharma* (True Religion), included both Hindus and Muslims. Incomplete conversion in the rural districts of Bengal left these people only nominal followers of the faith-a condition also found among the Christian converts of the province. The ignorance of these half converted Muslims is clearly manifest in the statement made to a Missionary by the nineteenth century “that Muhammad was a Bengali, born in the house of a Brahmin”.⁹

The following description of festivals and peculiarities of belief and customs among the Muslims of India based on contemporary accounts will show the extent of deviation from the original faith which Islam in India in the nineteenth century had undergone.

The festival of *Muharram* which commemorated the martyrdom of Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), used to be celebrated with much pomp and splendour. The representation of the tomb of Husayn or the chapel which enclosed the tomb, bearing the metaphorical name of *T'aziyah* or simply *Tābut*, was richly ornamented. They were carried in procession in the streets, “the devotees making silly demonstrations of grief” on the tenth day, and were then deposited in the earth, or cast into river or tank or if too costly to be destroyed were carried back and placed in the *Imām Bārā*. The preparation of the *T'aziyah* was carried on in every Muslim village of Bengal and “Hindu zemindars subscribed towards its expenses as the Muhammadan landlords did to Durga image”. Hindus, besides participating in the procession, showed profound respect to the *T'aziyah* and bowed their heads with much solemn gravity.

In Calcutta, according to a Muslim writer, the precisionists besides uttering “piercing cries and mournful groans” performed such extravagant feats as piercing their cheeks or padlocking their mouths.

The ceremony of *Muharram* performed in Bengal “with much gaudy pomp, tumult, and musical parade” remarkable alike in “magnificence of show and in intolerable din”. In Bihar, especially in Purnia, the ceremony is everywhere celebrated

“with the same emblems savouring of idolatry.” In Patna, Bihar, the *T’aziyah* were not as large as in Bengal, they were yet very numerous- 14,000 were annually exhibited, of which about 600 were made by the Hindus.¹⁰

The most remarkable features of the Muslim worship in India during the nineteenth century was the lavish veneration of the people on the Sufi Saints.¹¹ The belief in Sufi Saints and the worship of their shrines came largely readymade to India through those who introduced their religious orders from Afghanistan, Persia and Iraq. But the existence of the ancient *Guruchela* practice among the Hindus and the universal belief in the worship of local gods and goddesses made it easy for ‘Sufi Saint Worship’ to take a major part in Muslim religious life. In fact the Muslim masses entered into the worship of Sufi Saints “with more enthusiasm than into the regular religious exercises which are obligatory.”¹²

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the belief in the efficacy of prayers to Sufi Saints had become almost universal among the Muslims of India. The living *Pīr* was applied to for the aid of his prayers, and amulets were sought from him as security against dangers. Tigers and leopards were considered both by Hindus and Muslims to be special property of such Sufi Saints and in the Sunderbans the Muslim devotees pretended to possess charm against the malice of Tigers so that Hindus and Muslims presented them with food and cowries to secure their goodwill.¹³

The list of Indian Sufi Saints whose tombs had become objects of worship or pilgrimage is rather voluminous. Important among those who could count upon their devotees in Bengal and Bihar were Shaykh ‘Abdul Qādir Jilānī, Sultān Sarwar, Shams udin Dāniyāl, Shaykh Qutubuddīn, Shhaykh Bahāuddīn Zakariyyah, Shaykh Farīduddīn, Khwāja Nizāmuddīn and Khwāja Muīnuddin Chishti. The last named was one of the most celebrated Sufi Saints of India. His tomb at Ajmer is frequented by crowds of Hindu and Muslim pilgrims. Some carried their zeal so far as to take away stone or brick of the building, to be placed in their homes, which in turn would become a place of Pilgrimage.¹⁴

Blochmann mentions the existence of a further half a dozen Sufi Saints of importance who’s *Dargāhs* in Bengal and Bihar attracted local devotees in large numbers. He gathered short accounts of them from the inscriptions of the Muslim rulers of Bengal.¹⁵ Two miracle-working Sufi Saints of somewhat more than local

importance were Makhdūm Shāh Jalāl and Qutub Shāh, whose tombs were seen by BlochMann during his survey in Malda. Pilgrims from all parts of the country flocked to annual *Mela* (fair) in memory of Shāh Makhdūm while Shāh Qutub was commemorated by four smaller *urs*. There were, besides, a large number of local Sufi Saints of less conspicuous character, scattered over Bengal and Bihar, who were venerated by the local people who frequented these tombs more than they ever did the mosques.

A shrine of great importance belonging to this category and attracting thousands on festival days was that in Mansurganj at Gorakhpur containing relics of Sufi Saint Shaykh Sayyid ‘Abdul Qādir Jīlānī. In many parts of the country were mosques, supposed to contain of footprints of the Prophet (peace be upon him); such was the one on the bank of the Lakhya, east of Dacca, in which was kept a large slab of dark slate, fashioned into the shape of a footprint which was exhibited to any pilgrim on payment of a fee to the custodian.¹⁶ “In the same way as the Gayawal Brahman earns a livelihood by showing *Vishnupada*” (footprint of Vishnu), says James Wise, “the *Mutawalli* (custodian or trustee) gains his by imposing upon the credulous and ignorant villagers”. Of the same nature mention is made by Blochmann of the existence of a Dargah at Muazzampur of one Shāh Langar, the impressions of whose foot, he says, drew crowds of pilgrims about the time of ‘*Id al-fitr*’ festival.

The worship paid to these Sufi Saints consisted with minor variations, in going in procession to the tombs on certain solemn occasions, generally on Thursdays, sometimes on Fridays, to repeat prayers and deposit offerings there; the votaries usually carried pikes, indifferently called wands, lances or banners, a piece of cloth being commonly fastened to them. On reaching the tomb, these pikes were stuck in the ground until they returned. The procession generally would be headed by *faqirs* and the offerings consisted chiefly of flowers, sweetmeats, pastry, occasionally vetches, oil, molasses, etc.

To the *Mela* came all classes of people, devotees, musicians, jugglers, courtesans and dancing girls, idlers and libertines, rogues and swindlers. The *tirtha* of the Hindus followed almost the same pattern and it is no wonder that in 1832 C.E. a *Muwahhidūn* (the Unitarians) or *Ahl-e-Hadīth* pamphlet described, as follows, the degeneration of the Muslims of India; “If the Hindus have their Gayah, their Mathura, and their Kashi, the Muhammadans have their Makwanpur, [where the tomb of Sufi

Saint Madār is] their Bahraich [where the holy Sālār is buried] and their Ajmer [where the attraction is the well-known tomb of Khawājā Muinudīn Chishtī]. The one set build *Maths* over their idols; the other not to be behind, raised domes over their Sufi Saints' tombs. In the *Maths* you will find *Mahants* and *Gosains*; at Muḥammadan shrines, *Khādīms*, *Mujāwirs* and *Pīrzādās*.

The *Dargāhs/Shrines* were visited by the people in distress or in fulfilment of vows or for earning religious merit and in their journey to these places of sanctity, they underwent¹⁷“as much exposure and fatigue in reaching them as the strict Hindus on their pilgrimages to the sacred places of *Jagannath* or *Brindaban*.” Every conceivable object of earthly desire- children, health, fortune or honour-would be asked for by the devotees propitiating the Sufi Saints by offering some vows.

The veneration paid by a Muslim in this regard equalled that paid by a Hindu to his *Guru* or *Gosain*. The former believed implicitly in the miraculous power of the *Pīr*, in his ability to cure diseases, to make sterile women conceive and as in the case of Shāh Karīm ‘Alī of Jagannathapur, in Tippera, to rise from the dead and to cause rain to fall when and where he pleased. It was again customary for the *Murīd* or disciple to make obeisance, *Sajdah*, touching the ground with the forehead. This was undoubtedly in imitation of the Hindus in their reverence to the *Guru* and it was looked upon as most sacrilegious by the orthodox all over the Muslim world.¹⁸

Some Muslim writers wrote on purely Hindu themes as for example did Shaykh Fayḍullah whose ballad on the glorification of *Goraksha* abounds with the Sufi thought beliefs and practices of the Nātha cult of Bengal. The works of ‘Abdul Shukūr and Sayyid Sultān are similarly imbued with the ideas of the *Saiva* cult and mystic *tantrism*. Other typical examples of this class of literature are furnished by ‘Alā’ul, who sang the praises of Siva, and Mirzā Husayn, who composed hymns in honour of goddess Kali.

Even while dealing with Muslim themes, some continued to draw upon Hindu mythology. In *Nabi Vansa* (Geneology of Prophets), Sayyid Sultān goes to the length of including Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and Kirishna- all Hindu gods- in his list of Prophets.¹⁹

Another represents ‘God’ as having appeared as half Krishna and half Muḥmmad (peace be on him) to reconcile rival heroes, representing the two

communities. A striking example of this class of literature is furnished by ‘Abd al-Ghafūr who identifies Ganga-Durga, Padma-Siva and all other house-hold gods and goddesses of the Hindus as relatives and friends of Ghāzī, the Muslim hero. The interchange of ideas and thoughts had long ago led to the evolution of a common god, *Satya-Pīr*, worshipped by both communities and a mass of literature grew up in exposition of that belief.

Later Hindu cults, such as Vaishnavism also influenced Muslim writers deeply, and the popular Radha-Krishna legend became the central theme of many compositions for several centuries. In the work called *Pada Kalpataru*, Vaishnavadasa has quoted the Padas of as many as eleven Muslim poets.

A change in the outlook of Muslim writers becomes noticeable, however, in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, after the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* had started a vigorous campaign to purge Islam of alien practices.²⁰

Another type were the ceremonies connected with Salār Mas‘ud Ghāzī, believed to be either a brother of Tughlaq Shah or nephew of Mahmūd of Ghaznī and in either case worshipped as a martyr hero. To his shrine at Bahraich, pilgrims came from all over India “with lances decorated with red flags, and having at their head musicians singing and playing on tambours.” Some carried articles necessary for a marriage ceremony, convinced that Mas‘ud Ghāzī renewed his nuptials, he being killed on his wedding day. This ceremony, according to Dr. Willson, was celebrated especially by the lower orders of the Muslim society and by some low caste Hindus. The belief in the power of this martyr was so great that in the trees around the shrine, the devotees hung themselves with ropes by the hands, feet or neck, convinced that these vain acts of penitence would enable them to obtain whatever they desired.²¹

The legend of martyrdom on his wedding day is also attached to Sayyid Badruddīn Madār, though another version represents him as being father of 1,142 sons and having had died at the age of 395 years 9 months and 26 days. In the festivals connected with the memory of this Sufi Saint, pikes again appear. The pikes were planted in different towns and villages of India where musicians appear beating a kind of rum and fairs danced crying ‘*Oh Madar*’ and passed through fire lighted for that purpose. On the seventeenth of *Jamādī al-Awwal* devotees assembled at Makanpur to celebrate the annual festival.

It appears that there was a class of Muslim *Faqīrs* in Bengal and Bihar devoted to Madar who were called *Madārīs*. Some *Madārīs* in their costumes resembled Hindu Sanyasis “going nearly naked in all seasons, braiding the hair and smearing the body with ashes and wearing iron chains round their wrists and necks. According to some *Madārīs* the Prophet (peace be upon him) obtained access to heaven only by virtue of the words *Dam Madār* or the breath of *Madār*. Again, the ceremony of passing through the fire was evidently borrowed from the Hindus to whom Agni or fire is a much dreaded god.²²

One of the most popular and important among the host of such holy immortal was Khwājā Khidr. The identity of this personage who commanded awe, respect and devotion of millions, is still a matter of dispute. By the first half of the nineteenth century, however, the Muslims of India had agreed that *Khidr* “discovered the source of the water of life” of which he was the guardian. He was believed to be well skilled in divination and the phase *Khabar-i-Khidrī* (the news of *Khidr*) referred to public comprehension of the intentions of the Government. *Khidr* was also regarded as a guardian sPīr it of the seas and rivers of India “protecting marines from shipwreck.”²³

A most popular worship among a class of Muslims and Hindus of India, particularly of Bengal and Bihar, was that of *Panj Pīr* – Five *Pīrs*- whose worshippers were called *Punch Pīriyas*. These five *Pīrs* were invoked when danger threatened. In Bengal there was no special ceremony and no distinct festival kept in their honour. Every Muslim boatman on unfurling his sails would shout Allah, *Nabi*, *Punch Pīr*, *Badr* etc.²⁴ As to who these *Pīrs* actually were is uncertain, although the worship of the group was so common. Observers have found different names for the five in different parts of India –Major Abbott’s list for the Punjab is quite distinct,²⁵ while in Bengal the five are unnamed.

The list of Five *Pīrs*, in fact, change from district to district and displayed rather a remarkable compound of “Muslim hagiology grafted on animism”, and in Bengal and U.P. it is perhaps the most remarkable instance of the fusion of Islam and animism. Some *Punch Pīriyas* of these two places traced their cult to the five *Pandava* heroes of Mahabharata. Among the lower orders of the society, both among Hindus and Muslims, five small mounds in a corner of the house or under a tree formed the shrine of this mythical divinity.

Among the Hindus, number five has always been regarded as a lucky one; five members formed and forms even to-day, *panchayat*, or village court of arbitration and *Panchami* or fifth lunar day is one of the peculiar good omens among Hindus. It is likely that some such idea had been the origin of this peculiar worship and number five might have been merely used to signify an indefinite number as half a dozen does in England.²⁶

In Bengal a typical example of this kind of worship was the one of Satya *Pīr* and Satya Narayana by Muslims and Hindus respectively- the word *Pīr* being Muslim substitute for the Hindu word Narayana. These words implied 'true god' for the Hindus and 'true Sufi Saint' for the Muslims. No image was necessary. The Satya *Pīr* was appealed to only in cases of little importance, as he was supposed "to be very good natured and to concede trifles with much readiness."

The practice of asceticism on Hindu lines had come to be widely adopted among Muslims. Indeed so numerous and confusing are the groups of *Faqīrs* and so peculiar their ways of life, that it is often impossible for one to distinguish them as belonging definitely to Islam. By the nineteenth century, Bengal seemed to have some four major orders of *Faqīrs* of this category- *Arjunshāhī*, *Jalālī*, *Madārī* and *Benawāz*. These, again, were divided into fourteen orders, which again have sub-divisions.²⁷

Among other classes of *Faqīrs*, Ja‘far Sharīf mentions a class known as *Sahajiya*, who distinguished themselves by being dressed like women, wore female ornaments and accepted money from dancing girls. They love to play on *Tambura*, *Sitar*, *Sarung* etc. and sang and danced before their *Murshid* (spiritual guide).

The use of *Gānja*, *Bhang*, *opium*, wine and other intoxicating liquors, strictly prohibited by Islam, was common among a large number of these *Faqīrs* who often were great debauchers.

The ideal of brotherhood and equality, on which much stress is laid by Islam, was modified by Indian Muslims in imitation of the Hindu community .The proud distinctions of caste and the reverence shown to *Brahmins* did not fail to attract the notice and the admiration of the Muslim conquerors. The Shaykhs and Sayyids had an innate holiness assigned to them, and the Mughals and Pathans copied the exclusiveness of the Rajputs. by the beginning of the nineteenth century the doctrines

of caste seemed to have gained “a complete practical ascendancy” over the Muslims of some parts of India.

The Sayyids, the Pathans and the Mughals thought themselves superior to the rest and formed the *Ashraf*, aristocratic class; but even amongst them inter-marriage did not always take place.²⁸ The Sayyids, for example, would not give their daughter in marriage to any but one of their own caste and daughters of a poor Sayyid would often go un-married for want of a suitable match. The children of both sexes in such a family were taught to recount their pedigree up to Hadrat Hasan and Hadrat Husayn and this formed a striking part of their daily education so that the possibility of getting mixed up with others might be remote. Even among the same order inter-marriage was not always common. Thus, the Mughals of Purnia divided themselves into four or five *Qawms* who did not inter-marry.

Following the principles which originally divided the Hindu community, the Muslims also divided and subdivided themselves on the basis of the occupation they followed. In some places almost every trade formed a separate caste. In Patna and Bihar the lower orders though looked upon by the upper as low and despised would not accept intercourse with the higher ranks even were it preferred. In other places in Bengal and Bihar, caste system in fact had deeper root and the followers of a large number of traders were likewise excluded from caste.

In a similar manner Hindu belief in astrology was taken over by the Muslims. An astrologer or *Najumi* became oracle to be consulted on all occasions “whether the required solution be of utmost importance or the merest trifling subject” so that to the opinion of this person the high and the low submitted with childlike simplicity.²⁹

During the time of pregnancy, child-birth, and various other stages of the woman’s life, superstitious practices, like those of the Hindus, were observed among some Muslims, to ward off the evil eye or injury feared from an evil spirit. In fact from birth of the moon was supposed to have good or bad effect upon human life and affairs. The moon’s age was calculated before a journey was undertaken or to decide whether to build, to write, to plant, to take medicine etc. the water on a basin on which the moon reflected was used as medicine by some and on a certain day of the moon, charms were written and talismans were given to children for their benefit. Silly ideas again were entertained about the eclipse of the moon and a number of

functions were held by all ranks of people. A bride had to send *Sadaqah* (charity) to her intended husband accompanied by a goat or kid, which must be tied to the leg of his bedstead during the continuance of an eclipse; this offering is afterwards distributed in charity. Again, the power of the moon on the wounded person was believed universally to be dangerous.

In keeping with the practice of Hindu society the Muslims gave up the simplicity of nuptial ceremony and substituted in its place costly and pompous display. Music and dancing became a part of such ceremonies and some classes of people indulged in intoxicating drinks so that women as well as men continued “intoxicated with delight, mirth and jollity” on marriage occasions.

The dowry system which is against the rules of Islam entered Muslim society and often a daughter of respectable but poor parents remained unmarried and lived a life devoted to the service of God.³⁰ In fact, like the Hindus the Muslims had come to look upon the birth of a daughter as a calamity to the family. Following the footsteps of the Hindus of India, the Muslims in some areas put their daughters to death “merely to save the expenses and trouble of rearing them.”

In imitation of the Hindus widow marriage was looked upon as dishonourable and disgraceful by the Muslims, although Islam encourages such marriage. So deeply had the custom taken root that it was seen that many Muslim ladies, whose affianced husbands died before the marriage had been concluded, continue a life of solitude until their death, although overtures towards marriage were made. It was Sayyid Ahmad Barailvi who launched a vigorous campaign against this custom borrowed from the Hindus and by himself marrying the widow of his elder brother set an example, it is said, of the first widow marriage in India among Muslims after a long time. The same reformer succeeded in breaking down this custom during his stay in Calcutta in 1822 C.E.

Thus, long times of association with non-Muslim who far outnumbered them, cut off from the original home of Islam, and living with half converts from Hinduism, the Muslims had greatly deviated from the original faith and had become ‘*Indianised*’. This deviation from the faith apart, the Indian Muslims in adopting the caste system of the Hindus had given a disastrous blow to the Islamic conception of brotherhood and equality in which their strength has rested in the past, and thus, in the nineteenth

century the picture of a disrupted society, degenerated and weakened by division and subdivision to a degree, that it seemed, beyond the possibility of repair.³¹

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- 16 Azizur Rehman Mallick, *Op. cit.*, p. 14.
- 17 *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

25 Major Abbott, *On the ballads and legends of the Punjab*, J.A.S.B., vol- 23, 1854, p. 159.

26 Azizur Rehman Mallick, *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26-27.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 27- 28.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 29- 30.

CHAPTER- FIVE

THE ORIGIN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT OF THE AHL-E-HADĪTH MOVEMENT ON CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM SOCIETY IN INDIA

It is correct to say that the first Muslim society was founded by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) in Madinah on the basis of equality, justice, sense of duty and mutual respect.¹ After his death, Ḥazrat Abu Bakr ®, and Ḥazrat ‘Umar ®, and their immediate successors, maintained the same standard. Events took an unfortunate course after the death of ‘Hazrat Uthman ® and further deteriorated when the battle of *Siffīn* and then *Tahkim* (arbitration) took place. Muslims split into sects, and gradually every sect fragmented into sub-sects. Strife started among all of them, and they took every opportunity to attempt to destroy one other. With the spread of Islam over various parts of the world, the sectarian tendencies found fertile soil and flourished, even the Indian subcontinent did not escape this infection.² Obstruction of the processes of *Ijtihād* also played a no less important part in creating this confusion.³ Muslim society gave birth to famous scholars when the process of *Ijtihād* was still in full swing. Many useful works were produced in all branches of knowledge. The Abbasid administration saw two contradictory phases. On the one hand, Muslim Society split into many religious sects and very often the *Khalīfah* of the day patronised the ideas of a particular sect and did not even hesitate to use force in implementing them. This schismatic attitude of the *Khalīfahs*, on several occasions, led to the persecution of those who dared to oppose them. On other hand, this ideological confrontation encouraged independent thinking and many people dedicated themselves exclusively to the acquisition of knowledge. As a result, a flow of new ideas and theories found its way into the pages of books and many worthy institutions adorned the cities of Islam.⁴

After a brief period, this zeal for knowledge subsided and people began to rely mostly on the works of the four *A’immah-* Imām Abu Hanīfa ®, Imām Mālik Ibn Anas ®, Imām Shafī‘ī ® and Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal ®. Many factors in various parts of the world provided opportunities for these four schools to flourish. The outcome of this tragic issue to confine religious ideas to only four schools – was a complete check on the intellectual growth of the Muslim Ummah.⁵

Nevertheless Muslims never remained in any era without some appropriate guidance which came through people like Imām al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328 C.E), Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, Suyutī, Shah Walīullāh (1703-1762 C.E.), Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahāb (1703-1792 C.E.), Muhammad Ibn ‘Alī al-Shawqānī, Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd (1786-1831 C.E.), Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd (d. 1831 C.E.), Nawab Ṣiddīqī Ḥasan Khān (1832-1890 C.E.), Muhammad ‘Abduh (d.1905 C.E.), Rashīd Rīḍā (d.1935 C.E.) and many others. They attempted, in one way or another, to reform the Muslim society in political, social, religious, economic and educational systems and performed their duties as best as they could. Therefore, it seems that the Muslim Ummah, as a whole, was suffering from the same sickness, and that the remedy, prescribed by different doctors, had to be the same, though with a certain adaptation to local and geographical and social conditions. It will be inappropriate to say that the improvements introduced in Muslim society by various reformers in various parts of the world are to be attributed to, or be made a permanent school suffixing it to the name of, a particular individual. In the light of this background, to establish the fact, with ample evidence, that the reforms introduced by Ibn Taymiyyah, Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahāb, Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, Shah Walīullāh , Haji Sharī‘atullah, Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd , Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, Nazīr Husayn, Sanāullāh Amritsarī were not a novelty - these were part of the *Tajdīd-i-Dīn* (renovation of Dīn), procedure which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) of Islam enunciated 1400 years ago. *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Movement is also a *Tajdīd ilm* and a continuation of the *Tariqah-i- Muhammadiyyah Movement*, which was founded by Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd. Muwahhidūn means the follower of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), then every Muslim is a *Muwahhidūn*. *Faraiḍī* means one who emphasises the practice of the five pillars of Islam, i.e. *Tawhīd* (belief in the unity of Allah), *Salāh* (prayer), *Sawm* (fasting), *Zakat* (poor rates/legal alms) and *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Makkah),⁶ hence, a true *Faraiḍī* is a true practitioner of the five pillars of Islam. Then all *Muballighūn* (preachers), including the *Tablīghī*, *Jamā’at* in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, are *Faraiḍī*; and if *Ahl-e-Hadīth* means those who place emphasis on the unity of Allah, fight against sinful innovations and prefer *ijtihād* to individual interpretations, then all learned, including the great four *A’imma* and Shah Walīullāh , as well as non-learned practitioner Muslims are *Ahl-e-Hadīth* . If so, then no reason why a man should not, instead of a *Unitarians*, *Faraiḍī* and *Ahl-e-Hadīth*, be called a *Mujtahid* (a legist

formulating independent decisions in legal or theological matters, based on the interpretation and application of the four *usul*), *Mujāhid* (fighter against sinful innovations), or *Mujaddid* (reformer). The Şiddīq Ḥasan himself clarified his position thus: “Abdul Wahāb was the follower of Ahmād Ibn Ḥanbal, and Muḥammad Isma‘il Shahīd had no relation with him. Then it is unwise on the part of those who call the Indian Muslims Wahhabis. The important thing is to follow the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, not the creed of particular individual. All scholars are equal, whether they come from India, Deccan, or Najd. We are neither the followers of Ibn ‘Abdul Wahab nor of Muḥammad Isma‘il Shahīd; for proper guidance, the Qur’ān and the Sunnah are enough for us.”⁷

The Şiddīq Ḥasan, in response to this situation, struggled very hard to return to the Qur’ān and the Sunnah and keep their due status, therefore, considering his views as representing a permanent sect, as the above-mentioned writers have recorded, will be a serious injustice to what he believed in and worked for. On the contrary, wherever he has mentioned his name as one of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth*, he does not mean it as a sect, but those who follow the Qur’ān and the Sunnah.⁸

Mawlānā ‘Abdul Haq Muḥaddith

Mawlānā ‘Abdul Haq was born in 1551 C.E. in Delhi during the reign of Sher Shah Suri, *Mahdawi Movement* (Movement founded by Muḥammad Jaunpuri in 15th century and declared himself as Imām Mahdī) was then at its peak.⁹ He became a noted writer in *Arabic* and *Persian*, who won favour from Mughal Emperors, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and in time, became a respected scholar of Islam. His ancestors were natives of *Bukhara*, and later while visiting Delhi was ennobled and attached to the Mughal royal court at Delhi. His father too made a name for himself in the courts.¹⁰

His father Mawlānā Saifuddīn was born in 1514 C.E and played a very important role in the education training and development of his thought. Right from his childhood, he took very deep interest in importing best instruction to his very loving son. Mawlānā’s father had imparted a few such instructions to him that he still not only retains but followed them strictly. His father had deeply observed the misconception, misguidance, deviation and war of words of the ‘Ulamā of his time.

Shaykh Saifuddīn gained ground into the mind and heart of his son so deeply that he followed him throughout his life. During the reign of Akbar (Akbar also

known as Akbar - the Great was Mughal Emperor (1556-1605 C.E.), third ruler of Mughal dynasty) there arose tumult and uproar of the worst kind but Shaykh ‘‘Abdul Ḥaq sailed smoothly through these troubled waters. His earlier education took place under the strict guidance and supervision of his father. He began his studies with the Qur’ān followed by the training in writing which he completed in the short period of one month. For further education he was not confined to the syllabus of the time his father rather taught his son only well-written books. He imbibed in him spirit of learning so profoundly that he was completely lost in it and he could see nothing beyond knowledge.

Deep thought and tireless efforts caused him to finish his education at the age of 20. He stayed in *Fatehpur Sikri* for short period and there he was welcomed by Akbar and his courtiers. But, he could not live long among those who were openly practising against the tenets of Islam. In 1587 C.E., he left for Hijāz, he Stayed there till 1590 C.E. and passed most of his time in the company of Shaykh ‘‘Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqī who helped him a lot in attaining great spiritual height. He was now passing through a period when one wants his learning and scholarship to be put to some constructive work. Mawlānā ‘‘Abdul Ḥaq was fortunate enough to find such a guide who put his academic learning along the right path.¹¹

Mawlānā ‘‘Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqī instructed Mawlānā ‘‘Abdul Ḥaq to go back to India.¹² Upon his return to Delhi, he taught for half a century, and authored various works; noted among them are A History of Medinah, A Biography of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), and a work on the lives of Saints. He died in Delhi, in 1642, and has over 40 works to his name.¹³

After his return from Hijāz, Mawlānā ‘‘Abdul Ḥaq set up his centre of teaching and preaching in Delhi. It was the first *Madrasa* of northern India at the time from where the voice of *Sharia* and *Sunnah* was raised. The syllabus of this *Madrasa* was quite different from those of others. The Qur’ān and Aḥadīth happened to be the central point of education in this *Madrasa*. This lamp of learning and preaching was kept burning till the end of his life. Not only in Delhi was his Madrasa unique but in the entire northern India. It was set to defend *Sharia* and *Sunnah* at a time when the darkness of blasphemy and profanity prevailed. Antagonistic forces dashed against this centre of light and learning time and again but Shaykh ‘‘Abdul Ḥaq neither surrendered nor accepted his defeat.¹⁴

After spreading the light of learning and guidance, this sun at last set in 1645. According to his will Shaykh Nūr al-Haq (1551-1645 C.E) led his funeral prayer. Shaykh ‘Abdul Ḥaq’s was mental influenced by the environment around him.

When he opened his eyes of consciousness, *Mahdawi* movement was flourishing. Its founder, Sayyid Muhammad Jaunpuri was born in Jaunpur in 1443 C.E. He had sterling qualities of head and heart. Hence his contemporaries had entitled him *Asad-ul Ulamā*. He was well-versed in the art and teaching. Mawlānā ‘Abdul kalām Āzād writes: “Truth of excessive love and purity of heart had made his call so effective that in a short time thousands of people entered his order. His followers would remain the attributes of the holy companions. This movement of the revival of *Shari’ah* and *Sunnah* came into being against the true spirit of Islam. But this movement could not go ahead for long since the fundamental concept of the movement dashed against the principle of ending the institution of Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) being the last Prophet (peace be upon him). Hence the ‘Ulamā of Islam like Shaykh ‘Alī Muttaqī, Shaykh Ibn Ḥajar Makki and Shaykh ‘Abdul Ḥaq rose against it¹⁵

If various religious movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are taken into view, it would be amply clear that the most important problem of the period was to determine the true position and status of the holy Prophet of Islam. The concept of Islam, creed of *Madhhab* (religious ideology) concept of one thousand years of Prophethood and *Dīn-i-Ilāhī* etc... All these movements any how strike at the true concept of the unique status and position of the last Prophet (peace be upon him) of Islam. The greatest deed of Mawlānā ‘Abdul Ḥaq is that he elucidated the true and exact position of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and criticised all the prevailing misconception and perversion in this respect.

During the eleventh century A.H. the entire attention of the ‘Ulamā’ -e Hind was on philosophy and *al- Kalām*. The Qur’ān and Ahadīth had secondary place in the syllabus of those days. In such a situation Mawlānā ‘Abdul Ḥaq Muḥaddith Dehlvi stood to declare the Qur’ān and Ahadīth the foundation of all religious education and struggled hard, on the other hand to close the door of mischievous exegesis of the Qur’ān and its wrong interpretation.¹⁶

Important Works:

- 1) *Akhbār al-Akhyār*,(biography of Sufi Saints) 16th century. Urdu edition 1990.
- 2) *Sharḥ Mishkat Sharīf*
- 3) *Perfection of Faith (translation)*, Adam publishers.
- 4) *Ma‘arīj al-Nabuwah*
- 5) *Tārikh-i-Haqqi (The history by Haq)*.17

Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (1562-1624 C.E.)

Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī was born at Sirhind in India in 1562 C.E. His father Shaykh ‘Abul Aḥad Farūqī was a well-known Scholar & theologian. He received his early religious education from his father, and then studied Muslim religious sciences with several teachers in the city of Sialkot. He was initiated in the *Chishtiyah*, *Qādiriyah* and *Naqshbandiya Sufi* orders. He was a prodigy of learning and soon came to enjoy great fame as a religious scholar & sufi. He played the role of a reformer and came to be known as *Mujaddid Alf Thani* (Renewer of the Second Millennium) as he appeared about the thousand years after the birth of Islam. He was also entitled as *Imām Rabbānī*. The Indian Muslims of that time are said to have accepted Sirhindī as their most important religious leader.¹⁸ Sirhindī’s thought the “*Concept of Tajdīd*” is much more intimately connected with his awareness of the millennium and its impact on the spiritual conditions of the world.¹⁹

Sirhindī deals with the hierarchy of the Haqā’iq and maintains that, contrary to views held, according to him, by earlier Sufi, *Haqiqat-i-Kabah* is the highest *Haqiqah*. It is beyond the stage of attributes and defies any description. *Tajdīd* is mentioned in the *Maktūbāt* for the first time in a letter to his son, Muḥammad Sadiq. Sirhindī vaguely refers to his times as being full of darkness.²⁰ It has been generally accepted that Sirhindī started his career as a highly intoxicated Sufi, capable of uttering outrageous sentences about the essential identity of belief and infidelity, and developed with the passage of the time and orthodox Muslim²¹

When the *Mujaddid* appeared on the socio-religious scene of Indian subcontinent, Islam was passing through a very critical phase. It was an age of unbridled heresy and innovations in religious matters. The great Mughal ruler Akbar declared himself a Mujtahid, even became the founder of a new religion called *Dīn-e-*

Ilāhī, following which the religious beliefs of Islam like Prophethood , accountability of men for their deeds done in this world, resurrection, day of judgment, etc., were ridiculed and refuted. When the *Mujaddid* appeared in India, Islam was been perverted by such heresies as Akbar's *Dīn-e-Ilāhi* and many other un-Islamic beliefs& practices crept into the Muslim society. Akbar & his counties use all the influence at their command to popularize the faith of *Dīn-e-Ilāhī*.

In his preaching's & writings Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī exposed the fallacies of *Dīn-e-Ilāhi* and brought to the people that the new creed was a heresy. He addressed letters to the Mughal notables & exhorted them to remain firm in their faith in Islam& reject *Dīn-e-Ilāhī* as a heresy. And give away all other un-Islamic beliefs practices also. It was primarily because of the preaching's of the Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī that the new creed of *Dīn-e-Ilāhī* could not gather roots.

The few ‘*Ulamā*’ who raised their voice against these heretical tendencies were not only humiliated and abused, but also severely persecuted. Secondly, in the domain of *Tasawwuf* the concept of the pantheistic doctrine of *Wahdat al- Wujūd* (unity of being) was expanded beyond its scope which, in turn, became the basis of all sorts of blasphemous expressions and practices among the *Sufi*.¹⁰Another important contribution of Sirhindi was that he bridged the gulf between the Sufis and the ‘*Ulamā*’ by replacing the pantheistic doctrine of *Wahdat al- Wujūd* (unity of being) with the monotheistic concept of *Wahdat-al Shuhūd* (unity of manifestation). And this was his original contribution in the field of reconstruction of religious thought in Islam. In recognition of his services to the cause of Islam he was honoured with the title of *Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani* (Renovator of Islam in the second millennium of Islamic era). An idea of the importance of his teachings and legacy may be had from the fact that even in his life time his influence had spread far beyond the borders of the subcontinent in Afghanistan & Central Asia. In the course of time it made further inroads and spread into several parts of the Muslim world.²²

Reform Movement of Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī

Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī's contribution is due to both its range and its timing. He appeared on the scene to reform both Muslim societies and Sufi thought of the day at a time when Akbar, the then Mughal emperor of India, had been engaged in introducing a heretic, electric religion, known as *Dīn-e-Ilāhī*(divine faith). Akbar had

deserted Islam in omitting the name of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) from the Friday sermons in 1578 C.E. and in attempting to appropriate the status of a Prophet for himself. The silence of the ‘Ulamā’ and Sufi was broken by Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, who took up the cudgels in opposing the mighty emperor Akbar and in preserving Islam in its pristine purity. He defended both Islamic belief and practices through his writings with a view to curb the spread of Akbar’s heretic religion, he wrote letters to scholars and prominent public figures in different parts of India.

Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī spearheaded a strong movement for religious purposes. He ruthlessly attacked all un-Islamic practices prevalent among the people and urged people to follow the *Shar’ia* in letter as well as spirit. He gave the call for the restoration of the original purity of Islam. He condemned all such practices that the Muslims had adopted as a result of contact with the non-Muslims. He held that Islam being a perfect faith could not borrow anything other from faiths.

Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī launched the move to reform Sufi thought of the day by purging it of its un-Islamic way and practices. Though he was well-grounded in all Schools of Sufi thought, he adopted the *Naqashbandiya* order. He was not averse to associating his order with the ruling class of the day with a view to bringing them closer to the Islamic ideals. Sufi thought of the day had been tempered by an admixture of ignorance and innovations. Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī was the propagator of *Naqshbandi* Sufi Silsilah. He was a disciple and Khalīfa of Khwaja Baqi Billah. After the death of his Shaykh in 1603 C.E., he started his work to train his disciples in Tasawwuf. He became very popular among the intellectuals and masses through the mystical accomplishments and his letters, which were later on collected and compiled in 3 volumes, known as *Maktubat-e-Mujaddid-i-Alf-Thani* reacting strongly to the syncretic, un-Islamic practices, he reaffirmed the supremacy of *Shari’ah*. The first volume was compiled by *Mujaddid*’s disciple Yār Muḥammad Jadīd al Badakhshī. The letters were arranged a number by the *Mujaddid* himself. According to him the number of letters in the first volume totals 313 that correspond to the number of the companions of Prophets at the Battle of *Badr*. It was named as *Dhur al M’arifah*. The second volume contains only 99 letters, for the most beautiful names of Allah are also 99 and the title of this volume is *Nūr al- Khalāiq*. The 3rd volume is entitled as *M’arifat-al-Haqāiq*.²³ Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī belonged to late medieval times when

the Muslim Empire in India apparently seemed stable but religiously it was witnessing a serious decline under Akbar's innovation of *Dīn-e-Ilāhī* the situation was inherited by his successor, Jahangir and Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī through his keen and constant efforts of religious reformation ultimately brought about a positive change in the society.²⁴

It was during the reign of Akbar that the royal court deviated from the true beliefs and principles of Islam and it got replaced by the heretic beliefs in the form of *Dīn-e-Ilāhī*. It is said that Akbar earlier held true beliefs but it was in the later period of his life that he turned to non-Islamic beliefs and deviated from the actual path of Islamic faith.

The historians say that though he himself was illiterate but was sincere and allowed the ‘‘Ulamā’ to have discussions in the court on various aspects of faith and religions. The scholar belonged not only to religion of Islam but also other religion like Hinduism and Christianity. Mullah ‘Abdul lah Sultanpuri (*Makhdūm al-Mulk*). And Mawlānā ‘‘Abdul Nabi (*Sadr-e-Sadur*), no doubt, was given high religious status but both betrayed him in fulfilling their responsibility truly. Decrees about the non-offering of Hajj and non-payment of Zakat were issued by them and encouraged corruption and economic exploitation. At the instance of Abul Fazl, ‘Ibadat khāna was established for polemic discussions on religions and which ultimately led the foundation to his new religion, *Dīn-e-Ilāhī*.

This was the predicament of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī's time which he witnessed himself. Akbar's successor, Jahangir too was brought up in this environment. Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī himself, a man of great stature and well-versed in both esoteric and exoteric sciences of Islam gathered his energies to combat this predicament. Through initiating the disciples in great number at Sirhind and Lahore, he sent his deputies to various quarters of India and abroad to have moral regeneration of the people. Due to his constant efforts the Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī gained fame and his influences reached even the royal army. Although, Jahangir had no pure picture of Islam before him, yet he was not inimical to it and initially he did little care for the special esoteric view of the Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, propounded in his letters *Maktubāt*. However, it is said that people of vested interests among the nobles of the court motivated Jahangir that the Shaykhs endeavours were politically motivated rather than his own understanding of the letters led him to say that they contained the

views which ran counter to true Islam. Sirhindi was imprisoned in Gwali or jail by Jahangir for one year. The release of the Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī was however, due to displacement of religious minded courtiers and even Jahangir's own feeling of regret for the act.²⁵

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's approach to the question of innovation (*bid'ah*) is also relevant to the description of the non-Sufi portions of his views on Islamic law. Shaykh Ahmad very rarely speaks of innovations which are peculiar to the Muslims of India as a result of their life in the midst (interaction) of the Hindu people. In most cases he deals with the problem on the theoretical level. In several places in the *Maktubāt* he launches vigorous attacks against the distinction between good innovation (*bid'ah Hasanah*) and innovation (*bid'ah sayyiah*), asserting that either of them is certain to do away with a *Sunnah* and should, therefore, be scrupulously avoided. The innovations which Sirhindi condemns this context is rather trivial and none of them arises from Hindu influence. It has been said, for example, that the use of the turban as a part of the shroud is a good innovation; it is clear, however, that this contravenes the *Sunnah* by using an additional piece of cloth beyond the three prescribed ones. To place the *Turban* on the left side has also been considered to be a good innovation, though it is evidently inconsistent with the *Sunnah*, which demands that the *Sash* (scarf or turban) be allowed to hang between the shoulders. The opinion of those '*Ulamā'* who maintain that it is laudable to express the prayer intention (*niyat-i-namāz*) a loud, though the Prophet and his companions never did it in this manner, is also unacceptable.²⁶

Shah Walīullāh

Shah Walīullāh Dehlavi (1703-1762 C.E.) ranks among outstanding Islamic thinkers. He stands out as the most illustrious and gifted Muslim thinker of the Indian sub-continent. Allah had bestowed upon him exceptional faculties and talents. He had endowed him with the best abilities of the mind and heart and of spiritual purity and perfection. He served as the mentor of the Muslim Ummah through his writings, revelations and spiritual attainments. He revived religious sciences and may be legitimately acclaimed as the revivalist of his age.²⁷ Their thought manifests the intellectual legacy of centuries and they reflect the highest scholarship of their times. The appearance of Shah Walīullāh in eighteenth century known for his intellectual accomplishments, his insightful thought, his contribution to Islamic knowledge and

his revival of Islamic spirit and vibrant tradition of the Islamic legacy. Above all, he was promoted by his mind and heart in expressing his views which represent a valuable addition to the history of Islamic intellectual tradition.²⁸

Shah Walīullāh descended on his father's side from Hadrat ‘Umar ®, the second *Khalīfah*, and on his mother's side from Hadrat ‘Alī ®, the fourth *Khalīfah* of Prophet of Islam.²⁹ He was born in Muzaffarnagar, U.P, India, in a village called Phulat. His birth took place at sunrise on Wednesday - 4th of Shawwal 1144 A.H. /21st Feb 1703 A.D just two days after the celebrations of *Eīd ul fitr*. He was named Qutub-al-Dīn Ahmād.³⁰ The environment in which Shah Walīullāh grew up was highly persuasive and conducive to learning. *Madrasa-e-Rahimiyah* was functioning in the building of his house. He was five years old when he had his first lesson and within the next two years he learnt reading and writing and finished the simple reading of the Qur'ān at the age of seven. Advised by his father to say the five time Prayers and to observe fast. A part from saying the five time prayers he also joined his parents in the *Tahajjud (pre-dawn prayers)* raising his little hands with those of his parents in the invocation to the almighty.³¹

At the age of fifteen Shah Walīullāh was formally taken into bay‘at (*Solemnization for Spiritual Guidance*) by his father. He was garbed with the robes of Sufis (*Khirqa-e-Sūfiya*) where upon he started practising the Sufi rites in conjunction with his school studies. The syllabus of the *Rahimiyah* College had a specific distinction to its credit. He started his life as a teacher at the *Rahimiyah* College at the age of fifteen. At the age of seventeen, after he had helped his father in teaching work for two years, his father died.³²

After the death of his father he began his career as a teacher but during this period he went on Pilgrimage to Makkah and stayed there in Arabiya to complete his studies under Abu Tahir of Madinah, a great Scholar of his time.

In his autobiography Shah Walīullāh writes that when he reached the age of fifteen he took an Oath of allegiance (*bay’at*) at observing the Sufi practices as were described by the *Naqshbandi* order in particular. In a very short time, he acquired the qualifications required for following the path of Sufis. The terms and conditions needed for entitling one for receiving and wearing the *Sufi rug* (*Khirqa*) were duly fulfilled by him both in theory and practice.³³

Shah Waliullah's greatest service to the revival of the Muslim society and Muslim power in this sub-continent is the translation of the Qur'an into Persian. But he did it and boldly declared "The importance of the Qur'an lies more in its teaching than its beauty in literature and perfection in style". In his teaching Shah Walīullāh emphasized the importance of *Tawhīd* (unity of Allah), but in its interpretation he did not go to the extreme and he was not intolerant towards those who differed from him. He was not a bigot or narrow minded. He went back to the past for inspiration.³⁴

Shah Walīullāh was born at a time when the entire country was going to Political instability, social evils and moral degradation had rocked the country. Insecurity and danger to life and property were accepted as a way of life, peace of mind and safety of life were nowhere to be seen. Loot and perfidy, feuds and fighting had taken the country by storm. Disintegration had set foot in the Mughal Empire and the Muslims were split. Consequently, they suffered much at the hands of the Sikhs, Jats and Marathas.³⁵

Shah Walīullāh lived in an age of enveloping crises generated by decay. Embracing all the departments of human life, especially moral and political. The revenue producing classes peasantry and artisans, suffered grossly under the heavy and unjust taxes. Shah Walīullāh did not exaggerate when he said that the common folk had been driven to the wretched state of beasts of burden. The natural result of the development of looting and plunder, which officially went by the name of legal taxation, created a wide gulf of discriminated economy. Professor Shaykh Abdur Rashid writes of this striking contrast in the society of the eighteenth century in these words: this century is a century of contrasts of lights and shades. The luxurious and extravagant living of the aristocracy, and luxuries of home and dresses, music and poetry, the extravagant celebrations connected with religious festivals, contrast woefully with the misery of the peasants and the artisans under the crushing weight of taxes and imposts and the general licence piousness and depravity of the people.³⁶

The climax of the tragedy came when religious disputes among the Muslims which had lain submerged under the great Mughals, came to the surface with a vigour and fermentation unprecedented in the history of Muslim India. The factional disunity within the Sunni fold was generated from the jurisprudential schools of the Islamic law i.e., Hanafī, Shafī'ī, Malikī and Hanbalī, but since the whole population of the Indian Muslims was the follower of the Hanafi School, and the state also recognized

the Hanafī School only, discussions on fiqh remained within the academic boundaries though it is true to say that they turned acrimonious at times. However, a more expressive cleavage was brought about by the differences among the mystic orders, such as the *Chishtī*, *Qādirī*, *Naqshbandī* and *Suhrawardī*. The followers of each order upheld, defended and preached jealously the doctrines of the order to which they adhered. *Shī'a-* *Sunnī* controversy, a salient feature of the division among the Muslims, date from the very early days of Islam, but it turned into a declaration of war with the foundation of the *Safawi* Empire in Persia in 1501 C.E. when Shī'a thought was made the state religion of the country for the first time in history. An interesting term expressive of the bitter prejudice of the Shias against the Sunnis is used by the Shī'a author of the *Jahāngūsha-i-Khāqān*. He calls the *Sunnis* the enemies of the faith and state a term hardly distinguishable from the one applied by *Bīrūnī* to the Hindus of India. Shah Walīullāh was himself charged with Shiism when he refused to give his verdict that Shias were out of the fold of Islam.³⁷

Shah Walīullāh's greatest achievement that will live in the pages of the history of Islam is his translation of the *Qur'ān*. The 'Ulamā' even the average Muslim believed in the sanctity of the *Qur'ān*, to be studied in its original language. The diffusion of the Quranic knowledge was a task which Shah Walīullāh had undertaken from his early life. His sense of mission had led him to believe that if dissension and cleavage among the Muslims were to be eliminated, a correct direction towards the understanding of the fundamentals of Islam was to be provided. The *Qur'ān* is the book of the fundamentals of Islam, but since it is in Arabic, it was not understood by the people whose language was Urdu. However, Persian, being the language of literature and administrations was spoken and understood in the country.

Shah Walīullāh chose Persian for the translation of the *Qur'ān*. This translation was meant for the use of common man as he himself had explained in the introduction to the *Fath-al-Rahmān*. Shah Walīullāh, as has been eluded, took to the spread of the Quranic knowledge in the early days of his practical life. He had finished a portion of his translation before he left for the Hejaz in 1730 C.E. but at last the work was completed in the beginning of Ramadan 1151 A.H. December 1738 C.E. Shah Walīullāh 's lead in producing a rendering of the *Qur'ān* paved a path for others. His sons, who carried on his mission of spreading religious knowledge, left the need to prepare an Urdu version of the *Qur'ān*, and within less than fifty years two

translations of the *Qur'an* were made available to the public, one being a literal translation of his sons, Shah Rafī'-al-Dīn and the other being an idiomatic rendering by his other son, Shaykh 'Abdul Qādir.

Shah Walīullāh did not write any exegesis of the *Qur'an*. In his opinion only a good knowledge of Arabic was all that was needed to understand the meaning of the *Qur'an*. He wrote a book entitled *al-Fauz-al-Kabi'r fi Usūl-al-Tafsīr*, which relates to the broad principles on which the exegesis should be written. The salient feature of this book is that it strongly disagrees with the practice of citing stories borrowed from the Jewish legend to illustrate the Quranic verses and injunctions.³⁸ Shah Walīullāh believed that since the *Qur'an* is a book which gives the fundamentals of Islam; its commands should not be limited to a particular incident which happened at that time of its revelation. The book *al-Fauz-al-Kabi'r* is really meant for the guidance of students who want to make further studies of the *Qur'an* and *Hadīth*.³⁹ *Al-Fawz-ul-Kabi'r*, written in the Persian language, has its Arabic and Urdu translations as well. This unique work was done by him after completing *al-Khayr-ul-Kathīr*. For the study of the *Qur'an*, a prior reading of this book is strongly recommended, as it is of immense help towards the understanding the meaning of the *Qur'an*.⁴⁰

Essentially the *Qur'an* consists of five basic branches of learning or subjects in the following order:

1. **Commands:** Related to what is lawful and unlawful, compulsory and obligatory, desirable and undesirable pertaining to mutual dealings and modes of worship.
2. **Polemics:** It takes issue with the beliefs of non-Muslims; Jews, Christians, polytheists and hypocrites.
3. **Knowledge related to remembering Allah:** It is about the remembrance of Allah as carried out by the bodies, the universe and all the created beings.
4. **Knowledge about the annals of divine history:** These Quranic stories and historical events underscore Allah's sovereignty and oneness.
5. **Knowledge related to death and after-life:** Allah's sovereignty is to be recognized with reference to death and the happenings of the after-life.⁴¹

Shah Walīullāh's position on the compilation of Ahadīth is unequivocally clear and unmistakable. He recognizes that Ahadīth had not been recorded in writing in the early days of Islam. These were put into writing only after 1st century Hijra. This whole process was completed after second century Hijra.

The main contribution of Shah Walīullāh to this field consists in his classification of Aadīth collections in terms of their authenticity. An amazing point made by him is that the basic book of Ahadīth and Fiqh is Muwatta by Imām Mālik whereas all other authentic collections of Aadīth represent its amplification. The editors of the six authentic Collections of Hadīth and Hakim have tried their level best to present Imām Mālik's *Marasil al- Mausal*. In other words, all these Collections are at best commentaries upon Mālik's main work. The chapters on *Fiqh* in *Sahīh Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Dāūd*, *Sunan Nasāī*, *Sahīh Bukhārī* and *Jāmi' Tirmizī* represent an extension of the points made by Imām Mālik.⁴²

Shah Walīullāh's efforts for the dispersal and diffusion of Aadīth are of no less importance. The efforts that he made in importing the knowledge of Ahadīth are so widely recognized in India that he is primarily known as a *Muhaddith* (an expert scholar of Ahadīth) and it is further remembered that all the scholars of Ahadīth in Indo-Pakistan trace their links to him. This is indeed a great honour that has been given to him on account of his devotion to the cause of Ahadīth. The steps he took for the spread of Ahadīth are of two categories. In the first instance he introduced the study of Ahadīth, at his college and trained scholars who carried on his mission after his death. Shah Abdul Azīz (1749-1824 C.E.), his son and successor, was one amongst them. Another celebrated pupil who studied under him at one stage was Sayyid Murtazā, who later spent so much time in Yemen that he is generally known as Sayyid Murtaza achieved fame in Egypt by his great commentaries on the *Iḥyā* of al- Ghazali, on *Qamus* and his works on Ahadīth or Fiqh. The teaching of Ahadīth was not an easy task, not because Shah Walīullāh was not well versed in it but because the Ahadīth literature was so bulky that for a student of average intelligence it was not easy to get acquainted with it. Furthermore, all the traditions ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) could not be accepted as genuine. The imparting of Ahadīth necessitated the selection of a book of Ahadīth literature which covered the whole field of the prophetic practice, but at the same time was acceptable to all. Shah Walīullāh was really worried about this question. He says the question of

giving preference to a collection of Ahadīth over the others caused me worries; however, he pondered deeply on the question and at last came out with an answer of *Muwatta* of Imām Malik. It was the earliest collection and it was comprehensive and authentic. He was fully convinced that second to the book of Allah, the *Muwatta* was the most authentic book. Shah Walīullāh took steps to popularize the *Muwatta*. He wrote commentaries, both in Arabic and Persian, on it, and included it in the study course of his college. A part from establishing a school for the study of Ahadīth and writing commentaries on the *Muwatta* he has produced some other works on the subject.⁴³

Shah Walīullāh is perhaps the greatest religious revivalist that India has ever produced. The Sunni Islam in India found its ablest revivalist in this encyclopaedic Delhi scholar. He offered an integration of theology, philosophy and Tasawuf, (which was) catholic enough to place the fervour of the sufis at the service of an essentially transcendent conception of the divine being and an active preaching of the holy law. He stressed the renewed study of Ahadīth, but would not tolerate the abandonment of the authority of the consensus of the scholars.

He strongly criticized some of the popular practices of Indian Muslims such as the worship of Sufi Saints at their tombs. He also emphasized the duty of *jihad* or holy war against the infidel. However, Hardly points out that Shah Walīullāh's teachings had only very little effect on Indian Muslims during his times, though he did present a comprehensive statement of Islamic belief and practice in which all Muslim scholars, at least in the Sunni-fold could find guidance and inspiration. His attempts helped to prepare the scholars to defend Islam in India in a situation when the Muslims were losing the physical power to do so. In the opinion of Schimmel, Shah Walīullāh was a multifaceted theologian, who worked untiringly to build up a religious philosophy for Indian Muslims, who needed a new approach to religion in those days of catastrophic. He diagnosed the spiritual ailment of Indian Muslims and prescribed the right medicine. He tried to bring about reconciliation between the warring schools of law and the various Sufi orders.⁴⁴

Shah Walīullāh attached a great importance to reason (*aql*). He has discussed reason in greater details and has concluded that reason is superior to all other human faculties. In support of his proposition he took support of the Ahadīth of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Although these Ahadīth, according to the

traditionalists, he admits, are ‘weak’ (*za’if*) yet, to him, since their authorities support one another, they are acceptable. They are:

- First of all Allah created reason, then He said to it, ‘*Come thou forward*’. It came. Then He said to it, ‘*Get thou back*’. It got back. Then He said, with thee I shall punish or reward’.
- Reason is the faith of a man, and he who is devoid of reason has no faith.
- He who is blessed with reason is successful.

He then quotes verses from the *Qur’ān* and tries to establish his thesis of superiority of reason concluding that a man whose reason dominates all other beastly faculties, such as inordinate desire and sensuality (*qalb wa nafs*) is a true *Muslim* (*Mumin*). Such a person surrenders himself completely to the will of Allah and never revolts against the commands of the *Shariah*. Shah Waliullah accepts such a man as a standard for judging the accomplishment of other people.

This dynamic realism and logic runs through the entire system of Shah Waliullah’s religious philosophy. It is this utilitarian and realistic approach that he applies in explaining the differences among the various faiths and the four Schools of *fiqh* in Sunni Islam. The propose classical influences of Waliullah’s concepts of *ijtihād* are reflected in the works of the ‘Ulamā’ of Deoband whose religious ideology was directly shaped by his school. Shah Waliullah’s greatest service, which he has rendered to religion, is his commendable effort to write a voluminous book on the *Philosophy of Islam*. Shah Waliullah is the first man in history who laid foundation to the philosophy of Islam as a distinct and distinguished subject of philosophy. His books *Hujjatullāh-al-Bālighah* and *Badur-al-Bāzīghah* deal with this subject.⁴⁵ The composition of *Hujjatullāh-al-Bālighah* (The Conclusive Argument from Allah) was also the result of those favours, he states that one day after the afternoon prayer, when he was absorbed in the remembrance of Allah, the spirit of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) appeared to him.⁴⁶ *Hujjatullāh-al-Bālighah* is considered the master piece work of the eighteenth century Indian scholar, Shah Waliullah. Drawing on his wide erudition, the author brings together in this work the intellectual and spiritual disciplines of the Islamic heritage in his age in order to elucidate the wisdom and inner meanings behind the interpretation of the Ahadīth reports of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). The word “*Hujjat*” conveys the sense that one party

to a debate or argument has presented the convincing proof, argument, or formulation. This argument, according to Shah Walīullāh, “refers to the inner meaning of religious obligation and requital and the inner dimensions of the divine laws revealed for mercy and guidance.” He explains that he has bestowed this title, *Hujjatullāh-al-Bālighah* (The Conclusive Argument from Allah), since his book is like a branch spreading out from this conclusive argument. In *Hujjatullāh-al-Bālighah*, Shah Walīullāh attempts to elucidate the deeper levels of meaning of traditional symbols and practices while integrating Sufistic, intellectual, and traditional textual approaches to their interpretation.⁴⁷ Therefore, according to our knowledge, *Hujjatullāh-al-Bālighah* is the first work dealing with this subject so extensively and comprehensively and with an intense emphasis which are all its own. Further, most of its subjects and themes are hitherto unparalleled. It is an exclusive distinction of Shah Walīullāh that he combined the varied discussions on philosophy, scholastics, *Qur'ān*, *Aḥadīth* and *Tasawwuf* with his own forceful contemplation, observation and dialectical vigour.⁴⁸

Fiqh has received no less attention in his works. He is at his best when he discusses this subject; he adopts the middle course in dealing with the differences of the four schools of the Islamic law. He did not write any book on the codification of the Islamic law, but rather on the general aspects of it. In one of his books on the subject called *Insaf* he discusses the history of *fiqh*, dealing with the various stages of the collection of traditions, the nature of the differences among the four schools of Islamic law and the characteristics of these Schools. In giving his own opinion on the issue he followed a moderate and pleasant course worthy of his disposition. He studied the principles of all the four schools Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shaffī, and Ḥanbalī, along with their method of extracting formulae for laws from the fundamentals, like a scholar, and formed an independent opinion. He has discussed *fiqh*, and the questions relating to it, in a number of his book, especially the *İnsaf*, *Iqd-al-fid*, *Tashimāt*, *Musaffa* and *Hujjat*. A study of the relevant portions of these books show that he was seriously concerned over this issue.⁴⁹

The best known schools of *fiqh* among the Muslims are those of Imam Abū Ḥanīfa and Imam Shafī. These two schools have gained more followers and have produced more literature than the others. While jurists, traditionalists, commentators and the scholars in scholasticism are found in greater number in the followers of Shafī, the Ḥanafī school excels in governments and greater number of followers. At

this moment the right thing in the eyes of Allah is that both these schools should be combined in one.⁵⁰

Shah “Abdul Azīz

Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was born in Delhi on 11th October 1749. His grandfather Shah ‘Abd al-Rahīm was an eminent theologian and Sufi of his times, who had also been associated with the revision of the most standard work on Sunni jurisprudence produced in India commonly known as *Fatāwa-i-‘Ālamgīrī*. He claimed to be having an Arab ancestry the genealogy of which could be traced back to the Second Caliph Hadrat ‘Umar ®. His family settled in India fifteen generations earlier, Shah “Abdul - ‘Azīz was mainly educated by his own father Shah Walīullāh.⁵¹ Like his father; Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was endowed with a uniquely retentive memory. Shah Walīullāh insisted that his son receive a systematic education and directed it along the lines he had suggested in his *Risala-i- Danishmandi* and the *Waṣiyat-Nāma*.⁵² The latter died when Shah “Abdul ‘Azīz was in his sixteenth year so he completed his education of *Hadīth*, *Tafsīr*, *Fiqh* and its allied subjects with his father’s chosen disciples.

After the death of his father, he was elected as his successor and head of the *Madrasa* of his grandfather, known after him as *Madrasa Rahimiyya* at Delhi. There he lectured regularly on subjects of Islamic theology and philosophy till his death in 1824 C.E.

Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz fell victim to various serious illnesses like leprosy, piles, melancholia and almost blindness which considerably hampered his academic works. But he generally continued his regular theological lectures. Moreover, he contributed more than fifty books on topics of his diverse interest varying from the theology and *Tasawwuf* to humanities and social science, the most important among them being his of the *Qur’ān* in Persian named *Tafsīr fath al-‘Azīz*, his monumental work on Shia-Sunni differences entitled *Tuhfa-i-Ithna ‘Ashariya*, collection of his *fatawa* in two volumes known as *Fatawa-i-‘Azīzi* and two important books on the science and history of Ḥadīth known respectively as *Ujala-i-Nafīa* and *Bustan- al-Muhaddith*.

The religious ideas of Shah “Abdul ‘Azīz had made remarkable impact on the theological setup of his times. Indeed, nobody did stir the spirit of the Muslim intelligentsia of his age more deeply than Shah “Abdul ‘Azīz. Mawlānā Shah “Abdul Qādir (d.1230), Shah Rafi al-dīn (d.1233), Shah Muḥammad Ishq (d.1846),

Mawlānā Shah Fazl al- Raḥmān of Ganj Moradabad (1208-1313.A.H) Mawlānā Rashid al-din of Delhi, Mufti Sadr al- Din Azurdah, Mawlānā ‘Abd al- Hay (d.1828) are some of the most important persons taught and trained by Shah ‘Abd al-’Azīz’. Moreover almost all the existing important schools of Ḥadīth learning in India have the name of Shah ‘Abdul -‘Azīz at the head of their educational pedigree.

He died at the age of seventy eight on 5thJune 1824 and was buried in his family graveyard behind the present Mawlānā Āzād Medical College Delhi.⁵³

His ideas about the Hindus of India are radical. He did not believe in the abhorrence of their scriptures and religion. He considered Hinduism at par with Christianity and Judaism and called the Hindus as *Ahl-e-Kitāb* (having heavenly or revealed book). In his opinion they also had Prophets and divine revelations.⁵⁴

The difference in his opinion is due to the difference in particular nature and the habits of different communities. But according to him the Hindu religion like Christianity and Judaism, also became subject to perversion and innovations. The Hindu system of *avatars* in line with the Islamic belief and compare sit with the stick ('aşa) of the Prophet Şāleḥ. This fatwa is the most epochs making in the history of Hindu- Muslim relations in India. His spiritual predecessor, Shaykh Aḥmad of Sirhind is said to be the most outspoken opponent of Hinduism and any track with it was not tolerated by him. It was Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz who for the first time took this bold step. Shah ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz is considered to be so much opposed to the Shī'a doctrine that he is said to have devoted a considerable part of his energies in refutation of it.

He critically opposed all the un-Islamic accretions being incorporated in the social and religious structure of Islam in India. The un-Islamic evil of not marrying the widows, the practice of looking them down, the malpractices of *Khāngahi* (monastery) system , the common craze for influence of his idea that his nephew and his disciple Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd started a religious movement to restore Islam in its pristine purity and discard all subsequent un-Islamic accretions.

Characteristic of Shah ‘Abdul -‘Azīz’s thought is his unbiased and independent interpretation of things in the light of the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*. His father also tried to go back to the original and basic sources of Islam for the solution of problems and not to follow blindly what was said or thought by Imām Abū Ḥanīfa .

His opinion on this issue is contained in his *Tafsīr*. While discussing the meaning of seventh verse of LXXXI Surah of the *Qur'ān*, he gives the history and socio-religious repercussions of the pre-Islamic tradition of burying daughter ‘alive’ soon after their birth.

The matter was much debated before the second Caliph Hadrat ‘Umar ®. During this discussion Hadrat ‘Alī ® said, “*By God, an abortion does not amount to mawudah* (burying an infant ‘alive’) so long as it does not reach the *seventh stage*” and this view of Hazrat ‘Alī ® was approved by all. Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz further adds: “some companions describe even this type of abortion as unlawful and call it *minimawudah*. In the opinion of Shah ‘Abdul -‘Azīz, the truth is that it is permissible in the light of the permissibility of *azl* (interrupted intercourse). The *Ahadīth* which is called *Azla* smaller act of *wad* (burying a live) does not in any way construe the unlawfulness of *azl*. Its permissibility is established by the true *Ahadīth* and there is no doubt about it”. Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz goes a step further and says that like the permissibility of all, the use of medicine before or after intercourse in order to prevent conception is also allowable in his opinion⁵⁵

Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd

Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd, a socio-religious reformer of India, was the son of Muḥammad ‘Irfān and the 36th direct descendant of **Hadrat** Hasan, the son of **Hadrat** ‘Alī . Syed Ahmad was born on 6 *Safar* 1201 A.H. / 28 November 1786 C.E. at Rae Bareilly in India where he received his early education. He then went to Lucknow and after a few months of stay, he proceeded in about 1219/1804 to Delhi, where he became a disciple of the famous divine Shah ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, the eldest son of Shah Walīullāh, and received formal *bay’at* from his younger brother Shah ‘Abdul Qādir. In 1232/1817, he left the service of Nawab and returned to Delhi. Roused by the religious and political degradation of his co- religionists, he started on a missionary tour as a religious teacher and reformer. His tenets bore a great similarity to those of the *Arabian Muwahhidun* (Unitarians) in the adoption of a pure and simple form of religion, free from superstitions innovations and exaggerated veneration for Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Saints. His reputation spread far and wide and thousands of Muslims adopted his views. His chief disciples and constant companions in his chequered career were Mawlānā Shah Isma‘il Shahīd the nephew of Shah

Abd-al-'Azīz, Maulānā "Abdul Ḥay (d.1828 C.E.), the son-in law of Shah 'Abd al-'Azīz, and Maulānā Muhammad Yūsuf of Phulat.

On his return to India from Haj in 1239/1824, he began to make active preparations for a jihad or religious war. It is clear from his letters that the ultimate object of his reformist movement was to overthrow the rule of the British and the Sikhs and restore Muslim dominion in India and to restore the true spirit of Islam in India. His first aim was to oust the Sikhs from the Punjab. Having enlisted the sympathy and promised aid of his co-religionists at Kabul and Qandahar, he started on his expedition in 1241/ 1826 with an army of enthusiastic followers, and reached Peshawar via Rajputana, Sindh, Baluchistan and Afghanistan.⁵⁶

Sayyid Aḥmad continued to exercise vigorously his moral and physical powers by engaging in work of social service and social welfare and physical exertions till the age of 17 years. His devotion to his chosen path was so absolute and exclusive that he had a complete change of mind regretted the Un-Islamic activities of the society. His progress was the result of untiring dedication and discipline. After taking the formal *bay'at* from Shah 'Abd al-Azīz who initiated Sayyid Aḥmad into the three important Sufi orders viz, *Naqshbandiya*, *Qādiriyah* and *Chishtiyah* of India at that time. After the *bay'at* Sayyid Aḥmad was taught by his Pīr - Shah 'Abdul 'Azīz, the different ritualistic practices.

It is said that when Shah 'Abd al-'Azīz wanted to teach Sayyid Aḥmad, his new disciple, *Shughl-i-Barzakh*, a Sufi practice in which the *Muraqaba* (silent devotion) of the imaginary picture of the Shaykh is performed, the latter objected and said it seems to be idol worship. Sayyid Aḥmad maintained that in the latter practice there is an image of stone, while in the former case the picture is imaginary, occupying a place at the bottom of the heart being venerated or worship. When Shah 'Abd al-'Azīz failed to convince him by *Hadīth* or *Ijma-i-Ummat* as proof, it is said that *Pir* (mentor) yielded to the stand of his new *Murid* (disciple), and remarked! "Dear! Allah has endowed you with the *Wilāyat-i-Anbiyā*".

The Spiritual journey of Sayyid Aḥmad was followed by his reforming career beginning with that event. It gives us an impression that an '*Ālī m* and Sufi of a great repute as Shah 'Abd al-'Azīz was, unaware of the fact that there is a difference between *Tasawwuf-i-Shaykh* and idol worship. In fact, it appears that an un-Islamic

practice, resembling idol worship, had crept into the religious life of even Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz through the agency of Sufi thought. Finally, for the first time Sayyid Aḥmad received acknowledgement for his being endowed with *Wilāyat-i-Anbiyā* from his *Pir*. The greatest spiritual achievement for Sayyid Ahmad was the recognition from Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.

The fact still remains that these Hindu or un-Islamic practices had percolated into Muslim life through the agency of Sufi thought, and Shah ‘Abdul -’Azīz was not an exception. In *Sirāt-i-Mustaqīm*, Sayyid Aḥmad considered corrupt Sufi thought as the chief agency through which religio-social abuses entered into Muslim life. As a matter of fact, widespread corruptions provided Sayyid Aḥmad with reason to reform Sufi practices.⁵⁷

Teachings

The general themes of his teachings is that he exhorted the Muslims to live according to the *Shari’ah*, which meant to obey the commands of Allah and follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) strictly and avoidance of all that was unlawful, superstition and innovations. But his emphasis was always on the practical aspect of religion rather than mere theoretical. The themes of his teaching is fellow-feeling, co-operation, humanism, equality of man in the society, well wishing, refinement in social intercourse, etc. all for the purpose of building up a welfare Society.⁵⁸ Sayyid avoided from the very beginning, doing anything which could be construed as an innovation in religion or superstitions accretion to the teachings of the *Qur’ān* and sacred traditions. Sayyid Aḥmad thus led a chaste and unblemished life from his childhood days.⁵⁹

It was not often that one or the other of the Sayyid’s friends was unable to earn a penny, but Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd always shared the victuals sent by his host, and sometimes he even went without food to satisfy his friends’ pangs of hunger. Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd and his friends spent four months in this manner at Lucknow. During this period the host of Sayyid was ordered by the Nawab to recruit a hundred cavalry for which about a thousand candidates with their arms and colts had turn up. The host asked Sayyid to select two people from amongst his companions. He offered both the appointments to two persons not related to him and asked his relatives to have faith in Allah who would solve their difficulties too. Very much impressed by the Sayyid’s

selflessness, his host promised to make some arrangements for his remaining companions in the near future. After four months of the Sayyid's arrival in Lucknow, the Nawab asked the host of the Sayyid to arrange a hunting expedition. Shah Isma'il Shahid and his friends accompanied host with the hope of securing some employment during the expedition.⁶⁰ He attacked and repulsed the Sikh army at Akora Khattak (20 November 1826 C.E.); he was discouraged by the treachery of the Durranis and other local Khans, and decided to proceed to Kashmir. On the way, however, he was encountered by the Sikhs in 1831 at Balakot where he was killed along with Shah Muhammad Isma'il and his army was dispersed. His numerous disciples continued his reformist movement in India, and were responsible for the production of a vast religious literature. A few short epistles and pamphlets on religious topics are credited to Sayyid Ahmad. He is also said to have inspired the composition of *Sirāt-i Mustaqīm*, a work written in Persian by his two foremost disciples, Shah Muhammad Isma'il Shahid and Maulānā 'Abd al-Hay. Several collections of his letters in Persian also exist in manuscript.⁶¹

The achievements of the Shah's chief disciple Shah Isma'il Shahid (1786-1831 C.E.) are sufficient enough to demonstrate the role played by his reformist movement in the making of present day Islam in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. The unprecedented popular enthusiasm generated by Sayyid Ahmad reverting back to the original Islam, with closest proximity to the manners and morals of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), remains unparalleled in medieval Islam. We do not find people, in such large numbers who fought for the cause of Allah, mended the creed and morals and who exerted such a salubrious influence on the coming generations.⁶² The Syed was not only the first man in this subcontinent to arouse the masses for armed resistance to the 'Alī en rule, he also warned the neighbouring Muslim countries of the gathering storm, and established a truly Islamic state on the pattern of rightly guided *Khalifahs*. It would be no exaggeration to claim that those associated with the Sayyid's movement were the pioneers of India's freedom struggle. Popularisation of religious knowledge through translations and composition of tracts in the languages spoken by the people was mainly due to scholars who followed the path shown by the Sayyid. The religious, social and political awakening witnessed subsequently among the Muslims was, directly or indirectly, the result of gigantic endeavours made by the Sayyid and his followers which did not leave untouched the

language and literature but also the ideas and ideals of the Indian Muslims who gradually became conscious of the need for social reforms and giving up un-Islamic rites and customs that had been adopted by them.⁶³

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd (Life works and Thoughts)

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd was the nephew of the famous Shah ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, whose family is still held in great veneration and respect all over India. He was the only son of ‘Abdul Ghānī, son of Shah Waliullāh, the most celebrated traditionist and the best student of divinity of his time. Shah Waliullāh had four sons; viz; Shah ‘Abdul Ghānī, father of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd, Shah ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, Rafiuddīn, and ‘Abdul Qādir. They were all famous for their literary attainments and religious characters. The family traces its pedigree to Hadrat ‘Umar ®- the second *Khalifah* of the orthodox *Khilafat*.⁶⁴

Muhammad Isma‘īl, commonly known as Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd⁶⁵ was born at Phulat (Distt. Muzaffarnagar, India) on 12 Rabi al-awal 1193/29 April 1779, his father died in Rajab 1203/April 1789, when he was only ten years old, he was adopted by his uncle Shah ‘Abd al-Qādir, the first Urdu translator of the *Qur’ān*, who had no male issue and who later married his granddaughter *Kulthūm* to him. Educated by Abd al-Qādir, he also drew upon the vast learning of his uncle shah Rafiuddin, another Urdu translator of the *Qur’ān*, and the celebrated Shah ‘Abdul ‘Azīz. A child prodigy, he completed his education in both rational and traditional sciences at the age of 16. He often surprised his contemporaries by answering even the most problems of *Fiqh* and logic without referring to books.⁶⁶

On the death of his father, which occurred while he was very young, he was brought up as an adopted son under the care of his uncle ‘Abd al- Qādir. Subsequently, he was married to the latter’s granddaughter.⁶⁷ After Shah Sahib he was the chief theoretician of the movement led by Sayyid Ahmad. He was a firebrand ‘Mujāhids’, a real “Wahhābī” and the bold reformer. His book, ‘*Taqwiyat -ul-Imān*’ (Urdu), on the subject of ‘*Tawhīd*’, created a storm of protests from many ends and is still a subject of great controversy. He remained attached to the cause of ‘*Jihād*’ and was killed in 1831 C.E. in the battle of Balakot.⁶⁸

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd was possessed of high talents and he had a very ingenious mind, and a retentive memory. As is the case generally in youth, he was not very

attentive to his studies. Shah Isma‘īl , on being questioned, opened his book at random, and began to read much in advance of his previous lesson. He finished his education in the fifteenth or sixteenth years of his age. The fame of his high abilities soon spread far and wide. He had an excellent knowledge of moral philosophy, mathematics, rhetoric, logic as well as of the science of commentary (*Tafsīr*) and tradition, besides a respectable knowledge of the doctrines of Islam and Islamic law.⁶⁹

Gifted with the qualities of courage and ambition to the same extent as he was a man of intellect, Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd could be described as one of those master mind who are born after centuries. A man of unusual brilliance, he was capable of making addition to any branch of learning Shah ‘‘Abdul ‘‘Azīz once addressed him in a letter with the title of ‘*Testimony of Allah*’ (*Hujjat al- Islām*). His writings show the same freshness, vigour, eloquence and contemplation on the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth which characterize the works of Shah Waliullāh .⁷⁰

A distinguishing feature of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd is that, instead of keeping step with the scholars of his time who had limited their activities to purely intellectual and literary pursuits, he chose to act as a pioneer in the field as social and religious reformation. His work entitled ‘*Taqwiyyat al- Imān*’ proved uniquely successful in propagating puritanical creed among the masses. Shah Isma‘īl’s zeal for reformation and revivalism sharpened by the Sayyid’s guidance, prepared him to fight for the cause of Allah through his tongue, pen, hands, and as the chief lieutenant of his *Murshid* or the spiritual guide, and ultimately he laid down his life in the battle of Balakot.⁷¹

Shah Muḥammad Isma‘īl was his proper name and his father’s name was Shah ‘‘Abdul Ghani; Shah Walīullāh Muhaddith Dehlvi was his grandfather and Shah ‘‘Abdul Rahīm was his great grandfather. Shah ‘Abdul Qādir , Shah ‘Abd al-Azīz and Shah Rafiuddin were his celebrated uncles.

Shah Muḥammad Isma‘īl Shahīd was fortunate enough to open his eyes in such a celebrated family. His family was illustrious with respect to erudition, piety and purity, morality and spirituality honesty and following of *Shari’ah*. When he opened his eyes he heard the talk of Allah and messenger in his house and saw the fine example of morality, discipline and decorum, played in the laps of those who were at the height of piety and purity and was brought up there. When he grew a little

he sat before his uncle Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlvi and achieved perfection in both physical and spiritual learning.⁷²

He favoured of the unity of Allah and was against idolatry, and he enlightened his countrymen on the respective nature of these doctrines by composing and publishing a treatise with the title, *Taqwiyyat al- Īmān* or strengthening of faith. The abuses and innovations which had crept into its doctrines among the Muslims of India attracted his early attention. He found them deeply plunged in the vices of *Shirk* or attribution of a co-partner to Allah, or at least heresy, the *Qur’ān* and Ḥadīth having been almost entirely neglected, and the popular prejudices having been substituted as their chief guides.⁷³

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd was in the thirty eighth year of his age he, together with four hundred of his followers (men, women and children), after saying their *Eīd* prayers in Bareilly, proceeded to Calcutta, where Syed had thousands of Muslims added as his followers. The party stayed in Calcutta for three months. During this entire time Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd remained busy in preaching to Muslims and broadcasting his ideas to them. An old classmate of Maulānā Shah Isma‘īl and a learned Scholar, ‘Abdul Rahīm, who had become an atheist and who worshipped the sun only, was also living in Calcutta in those days. Shah Isma‘īl expressed his intention to convert him to his ideas after seeing him. But when ‘Abdul Rahīm learnt to it, he left the town without giving a chance to the Shah Isma‘īl to meet him, as he was sure that in spite of all his learning and knowledge it would not be possible for him to face Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd.⁷⁴

The distressed and degraded condition to which the Muslim of India of late had been reduced, and which, when compared with the prosperous and happy state of the nations and tribes whom he had lately visited, seemed much more deplorable, excited the patriotic zeal of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd.⁷⁵

He travelled almost all parts of India, and went from town to town preaching the sermon of *Jihād*. Emissaries were likewise sent into the interior to prepare the mind of Muslims for a religious war such as the powerful force of the Oration of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd that wherever he visited majority of respectable Muslims were in his favour. He also preached in the grand mosque every Friday and Tuesday. The assembly on these occasions was generally very great; in short, thousands of Muslim,

who, owing to the indolence of other '*Ulamā*', had yet remained ignorant of the two doctrines of their religion, to remove differences of opinion, a meeting of the doctors was resolved upon and had in the grand mosque to discuss the points at issue; but the assembly broke up without coming to the decision regarding the controversy. Whatever may the merits of the respective pretensions of the two parties, it is certain that Shah Isma‘īl continue to gain unabated reputation as a popular and true expounder of the Islamic Law, and the people were convinced of the imposition under which they have neither to be laboured. Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd generally gave such convincing and comprehensive explanations of the matter in question, that they dared not put to him any query. His opponents chiefly consisted of *Maulvis* and *Khādīms*, or attendants of the various tombs of the Muslim Sufi Saints. The revenue of the latter entirely depended on the offerings presented by ignorant visitors, and it was greatly checked by the religious instructions of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd.⁷⁶

The opposition which Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd met with on the part of the *Maulvis*, gave no check to his resolute mind, but on the contrary, served to enhance still further his religious zeal. The number of his followers increased with his fame. The crowd of *Namazis* (Sayers of prayers) was great in his time in the grand mosque of Delhi as on the festivals of *Eīds*.⁷⁷

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd started his work by preaching the simple doctrines of the faith. He elucidated the Quranic conception of the Oneness of Allah. Allah, he said, is the only authority to resort to in all our affairs; and it is He alone who can grant our prayer. He is the provider, the sustainer and the cherisher of the whole creation. It is Allah alone Who makes us fall ill and grants recovery. He alone has the power to grant children, male or female, Prophets and Sufi Saints are but His creatures. All are His servants. Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd emphatically condemned Saint-worship, Pilgrimage to shrines, vows, offerings and invocations to Saints. He denounced the institution of *Pīrs* and *Sufis* in the Muslim society in forceful terms, and made a strong protest against the heresies and innovations which were eating into the vitals of Islam. He boldly declared that Allah alone should be worshiped and bowed before. All people, including Prophets and Saints, are but creatures of Allah. He clarified the real conception of Islamic monotheism as well as the status of the prophet in Islam. In brief, he preached the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* everywhere, in and outside the mosque.⁷⁸

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd always kept the object in view. On one hand he continued regenerating the Muslim society by preaching the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*, and on the other he ceased not preparing and brooding over military operations. He took regular training for an armed conflict. He set out on a tour of the country for the organisation of the community, collection of funds and recruitment of soldiers. For conducting the way he accepted Sayyid Ahmad of Bareilly as the leader.⁷⁹

The first battle was fought with the Sikhs by the Ghazis on the 20th Jamad al-Awal, 1242 A.H. (21st December 1826 C.E.) at Akora, a place about eight miles from Nowshera when the Sikhs were defeated with considerable loss. Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd was the commander of the advance guard in this action. Although the army of the Ghazis was ill equipped, yet their success against the Sikhs added much to their fame and strength, till Yar Muḥammad deemed it prudent to enter into agreement obliging him to respect the territory of the Yusuf Zai.⁸⁰

With the demise of Aurangzeb Alamgir in 1707 C.E. started the political decay of Muslim India. The offspring of a great and powerful Mughal ruler Aurangzeb proved unworthy and quite short of expectation. The nobles and officials also followed suit. They became victim of mutual feuds and bickering with the result their grip on the reign lost its vigour. This sad plight of the central rule attracted rebellion from Rajputs, Jats, Marathas and Sikhs. This state of utter confusion, crisis, dissension and disruption gave birth to uprisings from Deccan (Hydrabad), Gujrat, Bengal, Multan, Awadh and Malwa, Nazīr Shah Durrani came and ravaged the country.⁸¹ But in spite of such a grievous calamity the Muslims of India could not come to senses and Shah Isma‘īl increased his rivalries. Islam had spread in India either by its inherent attraction and natural power of absorption or through traders and Sufi Saints. Individual efforts of some pious Muslims also played their useful role in the expansions of Islam.⁸²

After the action against the Sikhs the fighting career of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd began, he always led the forces of the Ghazis and came out victorious till he was surprised and fell in the last battle on the 24th Zulqadah, 1246 A.H.(early in May, 1831 C.E.) at Balakot, a place near Manshera Where he was subsequently buried.⁸³

His Works

Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd started writing very early in his life, and in spite of his active outdoor life, he continued contributing valuable articles and books to the cause of religion and faith. Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān thinks that he wrote many books, but unfortunately some of his works have not come down to us, on account of their not being preserved properly. Even as early as the time of Sir Sayyid all the works of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd were not traceable. From this it can be imagined how difficult it is to collect them all at this stage. Some of them are printed books, mostly in Calcutta, all the works of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd, it has not been possible to determine the exact dates of the composition of these works, as the author has not mentioned these dates anywhere. Still, where possible, it has been tried to determine the approximate date of composition.⁸⁴

Taqwiyat al- Īmān

The most famous work of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd, although it is a small treatise intended to lay down perfect rule of conduct for the guidance of the faithful. The book was composed earlier than 1240 A.H (1831 C.E.). Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd lived to complete the first chapter alone, or that showing the extent to which the doctrines of Islam had become perverted in India.⁸⁵ In the preface of *Taqwiyat al- Īmān*, Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd deprecates the opinion that the wise and learned alone can comprehend God’s word. There were two things essential, belief in the unity of Allah, and knowledge of the Prophet, which was obedience to the law. Many held the sayings of the Sufi Saints to be their guide; but the word of Allah was alone to be attended to, although the writings of the pious, which agreed with the *Qur’ān*, might be read for edification,⁸⁶ the book is written in an impressive and forceful style. All the views expounded have been supported by the *Qur’ān* and Ḥadīth. This has greatly enhanced the value of the contents and has given them a dignity, which cannot be challenged.⁸⁷

Minor Works

The important works, Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd is supposed to have written are several letters, two of which are preserved. One is written in Arabic and addressed to Mullah Baghdadi. A reference has already been made to this letter. Another letter is in Persian, which is addressed to Nawab Wazir al-Daula of Tonk, who was also a disciple of Syed Aḥmad. This letter was written during the *Jihad*, exhorting the chief

of Tonk to help the *Mujahids* in every possible way he could, as the *Mujahids* were busy in a *Jihad* against the Sikhs. Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd also tried his hand at Poetry, and his Poems are in no way a mean achievement.⁸⁸

Sirat al- Mustaqīm

The *Sirat al Mustaqīm* is the most important of several treatises composed by Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd in Persian. It gives the fullest account generally known of the tenets of Sayyid Aḥmad. The main objective of the author in composing it was to justify the claims of Sayyid Aḥmad, as a devotee, gifted with a surprising degree of religious capacity and illumination. Its purpose was to impart to the world the benefits of the experience and inspired discoveries of a Sufi Saint as eminent as Sayyid Aḥmad.⁸⁹

Certain reforms introduced by them in the social sphere conforming to the laws of the *Shari’ah*, for instance the remarriage of widows and the collection of ‘Ushr, resulted in the disaffection of the local population, who, at the instigation of the tribal chieftains, deposed and disposed by Sayyid Aḥmad, rose against the *Mujahidin* and in the secret night-attack killed all the tax Collectors and sub-administrators appointed by the Sayyid. This massacre was a serious set-back to the movement, and practically the whole of the territory around Peshawar slipped out of the control of the *Mujahidin*. The *Mujahidin*, now led by Isma‘īl, were driven out of Peshawar, which they had occupied in 1830 by ousting Sultan Muhammad Khān, a brother of the Amīr of Afghanistan, who ruled Peshawar as the tributary of the Sikh Chieftain Ranjit Singh. The forces of Sher Singh inflicted the final defeat on the *Mujahidin* at the battle of Balakot May 1831, in which Isma‘īl and his leader Syed Aḥmad lost their lives.⁹⁰

Sayyid Nazīr Husayn Baltawi (*Life Works and Thoughts*)

Sayyid Nazīr Husayn was born on 1805 C.E. at Surajgarh, a small town in the Monygarh district of Bihar. He is known as Ḥusaynī Sayyid as his ancestral background goes up to the **Hadrat ‘Alī (R.A.)**.⁹¹

He received basic education of Arabic and Persian from his father. However, beyond these two subjects, his father did not have much proficiency in any other subjects. He had a great desire to acquire more and more knowledge. However, this thrust cannot be quenched without stepping-out from the confinement of his home.

Further, the economic environment was not conducive at home. Mawlānā Sardār ‘Alī proved to be great companion of Sayyid Nazīr Ḥusayn as both the companions had burning desire to seek more education and shared identical views parting how to fulfil their aim of seeking knowledge. Both left the home secretly and reached Sadiqpur, a small village near Patna, where they met Shah Muḥammad Ḥusayn who was leading a *Madrasah* (educational institution). In those days, this Madrasa was the leading educational institute in the entire Bihar. During the days of establishment of Sadiqpur, a caravan led by Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd and Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd passed through Patna and they offered Friday prayer at police lines. The *Friday Khutba* (Sermon) was read-out by Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd. After coming into touch with these people, the desire for seeking more knowledge increased manifold. In those days, Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlvi who was also spiritual guide of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd was residing in Delhi. Both the companions cherished the dream to meet and interact with this great personality. To fulfil this dream, they left for Delhi with Mawlānā Sardār ‘Alī and when they reached they came to know that, Shah ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlvi had left this world forever, His demise occurred in 1229 A.H.⁹²

Intellectual Excellency of Nazīr Ḥusayn

The Mufti of Rampur once asked Nazīr Ḥusayn, did he know what *fiqh* is? Nazīr Ḥusayn replied politely what he wants to know from me about *fiqh*? Mufti asked how duties ought to be performed in an ablution. Nazīr Ḥusayn replied that he should have asked something different as it is so simple question!! Then Nazīr Ḥusayn asked him a question, can a husband touch the dead body of his wife during *ghusl* (special bath of dead body)? and participate in all the activities relating to her burial? *Mufti* replied to all these questions with one answer that after the death of wife the marriage between the two automatically gets terminated. Upon that answer, Nazīr Ḥusayn further enquired that if that is the matter, then why Hadrat ‘Alī did. Not finding any suitable answer, *Mufti* remained silent. All these things prove that Nazīr Ḥusayn had a stunning command on all the issues relating to *Fiqh* and other fields.⁹³

In 1300 (A.H.), he went for Hajj (*Sacred Pilgrimage to Makkah & Madinah*), during Hajj, he was entrapped by the followers of Ḥanafī school of thought in baseless and false cases, and ultimately they succeeded in their mission and Nazīr

Husayn was imprisoned. Though this imprisonment was very harsh and least chances of freedom, but due to the good nature of Nazīr Ḥusayn, he was later on released.

On 22 June 1897 C.E., British government conferred on him the title of *Shamsul ‘Ulamā* due to his outstanding contribution in the field of education. The conferment of this title was not so much big thing Nazīr Ḥusayn as he was contended with whatever he had already. He spent 60 years of his life in teaching and learning. He died on 13 October 1902 C.E. People from all walks of Delhi participated in the last rites with great respect.

His teachings remained not confined with the subcontinent but spread outside the sub-continent.⁹⁴ Nazīr Ḥusayn was a genius and continuously taught for sixty years, particularly the Bukhārī Sharīf. Even ‘Allāma ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Memon (The great scholar of Arabic) acknowledged the greatness of Nazīr Ḥusayn. His contribution to Islamic cause was immense and his contribution towards the cause of Islam is compared with the sword of Khālid bin Walīd.⁹⁵

Sayyid Nazīr Ḥusayn said that two ‘Abdul lāh’s came to me for teaching, one taught me *Namāz* and the other one taught me the methods and tricks of teaching. If these two people would not have come to me I would not have achieved the great strides which I have achieved in these two fields. These two people were Maulānā ‘Abdul lāh Ghaznavī and Hāfiẓ “Abdul lāh Ghazipuri.⁹⁶

Nazīr Ḥusayn was the great scholar of *Ahl-e Hadīth*. He considered Ahl-e Hadīth and Muwahhidun, as identical. The spies complained about Nazīr Ḥusayn that he indulged in avarice activities. His house was raided several times. Nazīr Ḥusayn received letters from every corner of India seeking different answers on various issues. Once, while raiding his house, the authorities saw the letters and asked Nazīr Ḥusayn, why he possess so many letters with him, Nazīr Ḥusayn replied without any hesitation that such a question should be posed to those who send them and not to the receiver !!.⁹⁷

Muhammad Nawab Siddīq Hasan Khān (*Life, Works and Thought*)

His full name Abu Tayyib Siddīq Ibn Ḥasan Ibn ‘Alī Ḥusaynī Bukhārī, Kanauji, known as Amīr al- Mulk Nawāb Sayyid Muhammad Siddīq Hasan Khān, Nawab of Bhopal.⁹⁸ He was born on Sunday, 19 Jumadi al-Awwal 1248/14 October 1832, in the house of his maternal grandfather in Bareilly near Kanauj. His father died when he

was seven years old. His mother arranged for his elementary education at home. And the entire responsibility of the family fell on his mother's shoulders.⁹⁹ He made several journeys to various parts of India in pursuit of further education. He went to Delhi, where he read Ḥadīth and Tafsīr from Shah ‘Abd al-Ghanī, son of Shah Waliullāh, and got *Sanad* (certificate) from him. He was an *Ahl-e-Hadīth* (he did not follow any of the four schools of thought in Islamic jurisprudence), rather accepted them in the light of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. He wrote many pamphlets against *Taqlīd*. He was an intelligent poet and could write poetry in Arabic, Persian and Urdu as well. He died in Baroda (India) in 1277/1860 on his way to *Makkah*.¹⁰⁰

Muhammad Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān's father, Sayyid Awlad Ḥasan Khān, proved a man of strong character. He rejected the property of his father, believing that it was unlawful for him to inherit. Sayyid Awlad Ḥasan Khān was greatly concerned with the spiritual degeneration of his countrymen; and he demonstrated this concern by participating actively in the reform movement of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd, Mawlānā Muhammad Isma‘īl Shahīd and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Hay.¹⁰¹

The missionary activities of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd were at their zenith. This provided a good opportunity for the realisation of Sayyid Awlad Ḥasan Khān's ambitions. He, therefore, became the novice of Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd. When Shah Isma‘īl Shahīd mobilized his *Mujahidin* for *Jihad* against the Sikhs in the Frontier, Awlad Ḥasan as a missionary and made many converts to Islam.¹⁰² In order to give Muhammad Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān a good education, Sayyid Ahmad ‘Alī of Farrukhabad, one of his father's friends, took the young boy to Farrukhabad where he read Arabic grammar.

At Kanpur in 1269/1852, Muhammad Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān met another of his father's friend Qadi Kallu, who took him to Delhi, where he became the pupil of Mufti Sadr al- dīn Khān.¹⁰³ He remained under his supervision for about two years and read preliminary works in logic, philosophy and *fiqh*. He also read most of *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, some portions of Tafsīr Bayḍawi, and Arabic literature. Muhammad Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān during his stay with Mufti Sahib and, after getting *Sanad* from him, returned to Kanauji in 1270/1853. Muhammad Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān proved to be a hardworking man.¹⁰⁴ He married Zakiyyah begum, the eldest daughter of Sayyid Jamāl al- dīn Khān, the prime minister of Bhopal. From now on he became one of the most important office-holders of the Bhopal state. Muhammad Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān

returned to Bhopal, where for many years he had been an honoured servant of the state.¹⁰⁵

The works of the four *A'immah-* Imām Abū Ḥanīfa , Imām Mālik, Imām Shafī'ī and Imām Ibn Hanbal for many factors in various parts of the world provided opportunities for these four schools to flourish. The outcome of this tragic issue- to confine religious ideas to only four schools- was a complete check on the intellectual growth of the Muslim Ummah.¹⁰⁶ Muslims never remained in any era without some appropriate guidance which came through people like Imām Ghazālī, Imām Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, Suyūtī, Shah Walliullāh and his sons, Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb, Muḥammad Ibn ‘Alī al- Shawqani, Shah Isma‘il Shahīd , Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, Muḥammad ‘Abduh and many others. They attempted, in one way or another, to reform the Muslim political, social and educational systems and performed their duties as best as they could.¹⁰⁷ In the light of this background, we can establish the fact, with ample evidence that the reforms introduced by Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb, Ḥajī Shari’atullah, Shah Isma‘il Shahīd , Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān were not a novelty- these were part of the *Tajdid-i-Dīn* (renovation of Dīn) procedure which the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) of Islam enunciated 1400 years ago.¹⁰⁸

The Ṣiddīq Ḥasan himself clarified his position thus: “ “Abdul Wahāb was the follower of Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, and Shah Isma‘il Shahīd had no relation with him. Then it is unwise on the part of those who call the Indian Muslims Wahhabis. The important thing is to follow the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*, not the creed of a particular individual. We are neither the followers of Ibn ‘Abdul Wahab nor of Shah Isma‘il Shahīd; for proper guidance, the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* are enough for us.” The fact is that Islam strongly upholds the freedom of expression as in the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*- nor threatens the security of society as a whole. The Ṣiddīq Ḥasan, in response to this situation, struggled very hard to return to the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* their due status which the derivations of *Mujahidin* were so unjustifiably occupying therefore, considering his views as representing a permanent sect, as the above mentioned writers have recorded he does not mean it as a sect, but those who follow the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*.¹⁰⁹

Doctrines of the Nawab Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān

Writers and chroniclers have reported different tittles for the Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān in regard to his works, views and contributions. Some of them called him leader of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* in the nineteenth century India; others gave him the name of Wahābi.¹¹⁰

Nawab Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān, in the first place, begins with introducing the word ‘Islam’ and claims that Islam, being a complete code of conduct and universal way of life, explaining his viewpoint further, he says that man throughout the history, has realized the existence of a superior being – the Almighty Allah, as man incapable of directly realising or grasping the reality of Allah, he made himself realzsed by revealing His will through His chosen servants – The apostles.

With the evolution of human society in various aspects, man found himself surrounded by numerous demands that multiplied his responsibilities. As man is more inclined by nature towards escaping responsibilities and getting his incessant demands granted, disruption and chaos in his ranks were inevitable. In view of this fact – to retard disruption and put him in a balanced and moderate direction, Allah continuously revealed His will in different forms – the most prominent among them was revealed in the forms of book – until it was completed, preserved in the form of a book called the *Qur’ān*, and was considered to be the final source of the Almighty’s will. It is now Islam, says the Nawab Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān, who can be admitted as the final word of Allah, and which has capability of guiding man in all circumstances at all times.¹¹¹

Nawab Śiddīq Ḥasan Khān then emphasises on the reading and understanding of the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*. The main purpose the *Qur’ān* is that it should be properly understood and acted upon as the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him); his companions and other learned men understood and acted it. The *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah* provide rules and regulations for the entire structure of human society, and there is no need for personal judgment to intervene.

There is no other criterion except this. Any man who sincerely executes three kinds of duties – i.e. duties towards Allah; the belief in the unity of Allah, offering

prayer five times a day, keeping fast, giving Zakat and performing the pilgrimage to Makkah if he can afford it, duties towards oneself, i.e. legal fulfilment of one's genuine desires, and duties towards human beings and other creatures of Allah.¹¹²

Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān, in the light of above Ḥadīth, states that all possible avenues must be explored for the enhancement of good and curtailment of evil in the world. This goal can be achieved only if the message of Islam (*peace & prosperity*) is made prevalent over the entire structure of human society.¹¹³ Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān then depicts the social and religious condition of the Indian Muslim society in particular and of the world in general and enumerates a few factors which, according to him, were *bid'at* (sinful innovations), and which, after finding their way into Muslim social order, gave a severe blow to the ideal living of the Muslims. The *bid'at* were: Ibn 'Arabi's theory of pantheism (*Wahdat al-wujūd*), i.e. it is only Allah who exists; all other things are His outward manifestation; and the theory of *Hulūl*, i.e. incarnation; showing respect to Sufi Saints and Pirs; celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muḥammad on the 12th of Rabi al- Awwal, hoping that it would result in good recompense to them in the Hereafter. Likewise, holding large gatherings on the anniversaries of Sufi Saints and Pirs; raising buildings on the shrines of Pirs and Sufi Saints; *Qawwālī*, i.e. singing together by repeating the first hemistich consecutively, on the *Mazār* (*shrines*) of the Sufi Saints.¹¹⁴

Similarities and differences between the doctrines of Shah Isma'īl Shahīd and Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān. Both parties believed that Islam cannot be confined to four schools. Every problem should be referred to the *Qur'ān* & the *Sunnah*.

- Mawlānā Shah Isma'īl Shahīd believed in Pirs (Shaykh) And *Murshid* (guide to the path of Sufi Thought), while Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān did not. (For the Nawab, the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah* were enough for guidance).
- Mawlānā Shah Isma'īl favoured the understanding of the attributes of Allah, while Nawab Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān considered them from Mīra Shabihāt (*allegorical*), and so could not be explained.
- Mawlānā Shah Isma'īl favoured the propagation of *Tasawwuf* among the public, while the Nawab opposed it.
- Mawlānā Shah Isma'īl believed that one's Shaykh (*Pir or spiritual mentor*) is the medium of access to Allah, while the Ṣiddīq Ḥasan refuted it.

- Both believed that the theory of *Wahdat al- Wujūd* must not be discussed and propagated among the public.
- Both believed that *Ahl-e-Hadīth* (in legal terms) must be followed, because they renovated the teaching of the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*.
- Both Shah Isma‘īl and the Nawab rejected concentration of one’s mind on the visionary image of one’s Shaykh, considering that the Shaykh is in his novice’s presence.
- Mawlānā Shah Isma‘īl believed that after the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah*, every Imām (*Khalīfa*) of the time is a *Shari‘ah*. Ḫiddīq Hasan, on the other hand, did not believe in the finality of any law. Whatsoever of this kind (Mawlānā Shah Isma‘īl’s view appears to be a right one, if the maintenance of law and order in the society is taken into account).
- Both strived hard –to eradicate the un-Islamic customs and traditions from the Muslim society.
- Neither of the two favoured superiority on racial grounds. Islam is a pretty good standard for a man’s superiority or inferiority.
- Both refuted blind faith (*Taqlīd*), and favoured *Ijtihād*.
- Both deplored the non-Islamic practice of the so- called *mystics* (though their approach to the practise’ being un- Islamic differs).
- Both believed in the genuineness of the order of succession of the four orthodox Khalīfah.¹¹⁵

Mauwlānā Sanāullah Amritsarī (1868-1948 C.E.) (Life works and Thoughts)

Sanāullah was the last of the personalities of the Indian Ahl-e-Hadīth community. His father Khizar Joo, a Kashmiri, was a petty trader of Kashmiri woollen clothes and had settled in Amritsar. He died when Sanaullah was in his early boyhood. A scholar happened to notice his sharp intellect and wonderful memory and advised him to go in quest of knowledge, so, he joined a *Madrasah* in Amritsar. After completing secondary stage of education he went to Delhi for higher studies in theology. His teacher in Delhi was the great scholar of Hadīth, Syed Nazīr Husayn.

He also studied at Deoband and was a student of Mawlānā Maḥmūdul Ḥasan. Having qualified in all the disciplines of Islamic *theology, philosophy, logic, mathematics and medicine*, he went back to Amritsar.¹¹⁶ He was a versatile genius, a dynamic leader, a prolific writer, an excellent orator, extraordinary activist of Ahl-e-Hadīth movement in India and the valiant defender of the faith. The cherished memory of his services is the most valuable asset of the Ahl-e-Hadīth community of the Indian sub-continent. *Shaykh-ul Islām* Mawlānā Sanaullāh Amritsarī had the great qualities of participating in dialogues and debates with prominent expertise.

Mawlānā Amritsari was born on June 1868 C.E. (1287 A.H) in Amritsar. That time, he was just 7 years old when his father died. He was brought up by his older brother Muḥammad Ibrāhīm. His mother also died when he was just 14 years. His desire grew to seek more & more knowledge when he was just 14 years. He was admitted to *Madrasah al- Tayīd ul Islam*, Amritsar, whose principle was Maulānā Ahmadullah (1336 A.H) and received elementary education from Mawlānā . After completing education there, he went to Deoband for higher learning where he learnt various books on the subject from *Shaykh ul- Hind* Mawlānā Maḥmūd al- Ḥassan (1339 A.H). After that, he takes admission in Madrasa ‘Faiz-i ‘Ām’ in Kanpur and there he learnt various books of philosophy and logic. In the same year, he was the member of ‘*Nadvatul ‘Ulamā*’ Movement started by Mawlānā Shiblī Nu’manī. He also received some education relating to health from Hakeem Fazullah Kanpuri. In 1898, he became the Principal of Madrasa ‘*Islamiya Malair Katla*’ and performed his duties there until 1900. After departing from this *Madrasa*, he devoted his major time for writing books on Islam. During that period in 1902, he passed the examination of Mawlānā Fāzil from Punjab University.¹¹⁷

He started his career as a teacher. He was very much interested in the comparative study of different faiths and had thoroughly studied the scriptures of other faiths. Those were the days when the Christian missionaries had launched their campaign of propagation and proselytization of Muslims was their main target. They challenged the Muslim scholars for polemical confrontation. Young Mawlānā Amritsarī accepted their challenge. His erudition, versatility and articulation made him the most sought after scholar to represent the Muslims. Many prominent priests and preachers of Trinity had to concede their defeat. Now, he devoted himself to

espouse the cause of Islam and to rebut and refute the charges of the antagonists against Islam and the messenger of Islam (peace be upon him).

He successfully defended his religion and silenced all the detractors. Like the missionaries, the Arya Samajis were also active in their anti-Islamic campaign Swami Dayanand, the founding father of Arya Samaj, in his renowned work ‘*Satyaratna Prakash*’, had criticized certain verses of the *Qur'an*, Amritsar in his book ‘*Haq Prakash*’ critically examined all his objections and proved that Swami’s objections were due to his ignorance of Arabic language and grammar. He was unable to comprehend the real sense of the verses. When another Arya Samaji scholar authored a provocative book entitled “*Rangila Rasul*”, the Muslims protested against this outrageous attempt. Amritsari immediately completed his book ‘*Muhaddis Rasul*’ (the holy messenger) and established, on the basis of historical evidences, that the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was a man of immaculate character and all the aspersions cast by the author were false and absurd.¹¹⁸

Qādianiat (qadianism) was the new cult expounded by one Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad of *Qādian* (Punjab), he was in fact a protégé of the British colonialism who was encouraged by the white rules to create dissension and dissipation among the Indian Muslims. The *Jihad* movement launched by the Sayyid Ahmad had unnerved British that had been sparked by the clarion call for *Jihad* and the humiliating defeat of the British army in the Ambeyla War had compelled the English to have recourse to their treacherous diplomacy. The Mirzā of Qadian was persuaded to distract the activities and cause to extinguish the spirit of *Jihad*. He therefore, proclaimed himself to be a Prophet Muhammad and the one who had been divinely commissioned to guide the people. He attracted the Muslim masses and declared that jihad was now forbidden.

He exhorted his followers to be loyal to the British rules and fight in defence of the empire. This was what the British had desired. The Mirzā had himself confessed that he was the self-planted sapling of the British. His pretentious proclamations, which he termed as revelation and afflatus, exasperated the Muslims. They were vociferous in their protests against his propagations. But it was Sanāullah who challenged him and exposed him by pointing out contradictions in his utterance. He analysed all his predictions and prophecies and proved that they were at variance with the facts. The Mirzā first tried to turn down the objections of his critic. But

Sanāullah persistently chased him and went all the way to Qadiān to have a face to face dialogue with the pseudo Prophet Muḥammad. His grip was so firm and his objections so stunning that the Mirzā was dumb founded. He lost his patience and in a fit of hysterical outburst showered invectives upon Sanāullah and all the Muslims who did not believe in his Prophethood. But this outrage failed to provoke the great scholar. He had a wonderful sense of humour and was known for his repartees. In his weekly journal “*Ahl-e-Hadīth*” he regularly published Mirzā’s utterances with his sarcastic comments. His weekly was a very popular Urdu journal and had a large circulation. His comments and refutation of Mirzā’s pretensions proclamations and prophecies disillusioned many of his followers and they returned to the fold of Islam. The Mirzā was enraged as a result his sophistry and pretensions were losing their appeal and attraction. He was desperate and invoked Allah’s curse on Sanāullah saying “*may the liar perish in the life time of the veracious*”, the invention was answered and behold!

Pseudo Prophet himself died the next year 1908 while Sanāullah lived for forty years (1948) and was looked upon as a symbol of divine grace and veracity. After this miraculous event he was called ‘*Fātēh Qādiān*’ (the victor of Qadian).¹¹⁹

Sanāullah not only challenged the anti-Islamic forces but he was much more active against the obscurantist elements among the Muslims. Those who invoke the blessings of their saints besides Allah and practise innovations (Shirk-e-bida) are a strayed lot. Islam means what is enshrined in the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* (precepts and practice of the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)). All that is not enjoined and allowed by the *Shari’ah* (Islamic code) is un-Islamic and must be denounced and discarded as the bedrock of our Faith is Pristine monotheism. Sanāullah, the great *Salafī* (*Ahl-e-Hadīth*) scholar was in the fore front of those who crusaded against such un-Islamic practices and preachings. Thousands of Muslims were guided to the right path due to his untiring efforts. But those who survived and depended on such un-Islamic practice were furious and retaliated violently as a result he was seriously wounded but survived. There was a country wide protest against this brutality. The culprit was arrested and sentenced for four years. He was a poor man there was no one to support his family. Those who had exploited and abused him for their nefarious designs turned their backs on the poor man’s family. They had been starving and there

was no one to come to their help. Sanāullah came to know of their plight he was moved.¹²⁰

A part from editing his weekly journal, The Ahl-e-Hadīth , he published and edited some other journals like *Maraqqai Qādiānī*, the Musalmān, etc. he authored and accomplished more than 100 books, which include booklets, treatises and commentary on the *Qur'ān* both in Urdu and Arabic running into thousands of pages.

He was active in the public life also, participated in the *Khilāfat Movement*, was one of the founder members of the *Jamī'at 'Ulamā -e-Hind* and also played a pivotal role in the formation of *All India Ahl-e-Hadīth Conference* in 1906, the main and the representative organisation of the Indian Ahl-e-Hadīth community. It was an apolitical body wedded to the Socio-religious reform of the Muslims. Sanāullah was chosen its general secretary and shouldered this responsibility till he was forced to immigrate to Pakistan when during the communal frenzy his only son Mawlānā Sanāullah was killed.

His library, printing press and book Depot were also set ablaze in Amritsar. Dejected and broken hearted he left for Lahore. The trauma bad shattered him. He did not survive long, suffered a severe attack of paralysis and died in February 1948.¹²¹

He was a versatile genius, a dynamic leader, a prolific writer, an excellent orator, extraordinary activist of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* (Wahhābī) movement in India and the valiant defender of the Faith. He forms one of the brightest chapters of the Ahl-e-Hadīth movement in India. The cherished memory of his services is the most valuable asset of the Ahl-e-Hadīth community of the Indian Sub-Continent.¹²²

Politics: Initially, he was the member of Indian National Congress but after the establishment of Muslim league in 1906, he joined the league. He was in favour of the creation of Pakistan. All India Ahl-e Hadīth conference establishments on 22 December, 1906 C.E., was all due to his tireless efforts. He was conferred the title of “*Chief Haditah*” on 2 October 1921 by the scholars of Lahore Ahl-e- Hadīth. He was also the member of a conference in Kanpur which was held for the establishment of Nadoo.

It was due his efforts that in 1919, the organisation of *Jamm'at-i 'Ulma* came into existence. The first conference of this movement took place at Amritsar under the chairmanship of Mufti Wilātullah (1372.H). In 1926 he went for Hajj on august 13,

he was injured in a bomb explosion and later died due to injuries. The number of all his publications range between 133. He is considered as the leading advocate of the Muslims in the entire Indian sub-continent.¹²³

Sanāullah was bestowed with unique qualities by Almighty Allah. He had all the qualities which a noble human being possesses like honesty, hospitality, soberness, gentle, affectionate, intellectual, writer, etc. besides he did a great work for the Muslim cause. He has almost 130 books to his credit. He does not write on any particular field or subject but on diverse issues and subjects. He wrote on *Christianity*, *Arya Samaj*, *Hinduism*, *Idolatry*, etc. he was given the title of Lion of Punjab and victorious on Qādiān and chief Ahl-e- Ḥadīth unanimously by all the Muslims. He issued the weekly magazine Ahl-e-Ḥadīth Amritsar which he wholly dedicated to the Islamic cause. Besides his role in the Indian politics and freedom struggle was exemplary.¹²⁴

Mawlānā “Abdul Kalām Āzād (1888-1957 C.E.) (Life , works and Thought)

‘Abdul Kalām Āzād was born on November 11, 1888 in the sacred city of Makkah; he was the second son and fourth issue of Mawlānā Khayruddīn, a renowned religious scholar of his time. He was named Muhyuddīn. Although Makkah is a small city of Arabia but Muslim of the world called it “Harām”, Muslims of the world offer their prayers facing it alone.¹²⁵

‘Abdul Kalām Āzād was an Indian scholar and a senior political leader of the Indian independence movement. Following India’s independence, he became the first Minister of education in the Indian government. In 1992 he was posthumously awarded India’s highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna there is also a theory which suggests that earlier when he was offered Bharat Ratna he promptly declined it saying that it should not be given to those who have been on the selection committee. Later he was awarded posthumously in 1992. He is commonly remembered as Mawlānā Āzād ; the word Mawlānā is an honorific meaning ‘learned man’, and he had adopted Āzād (Free) as his pen name. His contribution to establishing the education foundation in India is recognised by celebrating his birthday as “National Education Day” across India.

As a young man, Āzād composed poetry in Urdu language, as well as treatises on religion and philosophy. He rose to prominence through his work as a journalist,

publishing works, as critique of the British Raj and espousing the causes of Indian Nationalism. Āzād became the leader of the Khilāfat Movement, during which he came into close contact with the Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi. Āzād became an enthusiastic supporter of Gandhi's ideas of non-violent civil disobedience, and worked to organise the non-cooperation movement in protest of the 1919 Rowlatt Acts. Āzād committed himself to Gandhi's including promoting Swadeshi (indigenous) products and the cause of Swaraj (Self-Rule) for India. In 1923, he became the youngest person to serve as the President of the Indian National Congress.¹²⁶

Abul Kalām Āzād 's ancestors came to India during the rule of Babar, the founder of Mughal dynasty. Mawlānā Abul Kalām Āzād was one of the most outstanding Indian Muslims of this Century. His father, Mawlānā Khayruddin, had migrated to Arabia in 1859. In 1898, Mawlānā Āzād accompanied his parents to India and settled in Calcutta (now Kolkata). He was initially exposed only to religious education. At first his father taught him, but later on services of other teachers were required soon, he acquired proficiency in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu languages. Later, he decided to be called Mawlānā Āzād and adopted the pen name Āzād or 'free' to indicate his independence from the orbit he was nourished in. Mawlānā Āzād was essentially a scholar who chose to join India's struggle for freedom.¹²⁷

He was also trained in the four Sunni schools of thought; Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shafī'ī and Ḥanbalī, Fiqh, Shari'ah, Mathematics, Philosophy, World History and Science by reputed tutors hired by his family. Determined student, the precocious Āzād was running a library, a reading room, a debating society before he was twelve, wanted to write on the life of Ghazālī at twelve, was contributing learned articles to *Makhzān* (the best known literary magazine of the day) at fourteen, was teaching a class of students, most of whom were twice his age, when he was merely fifteen and succeeded in completing the traditional course of study at the young age of sixteen, nine years ahead of his contemporaries, and brought out a magazine at the same age. In fact, in the field of journalism, he published a poetical journal (*Nāirang-e-Ālam*) and was already an editor of a weekly (*Al-Miṣbāḥ*), in 1900, at the age of twelve and, in 1903, brought out a monthly journal, *Lisān-us-Sidq*, which soon gained popularity. At the age of thirteen, he was married to a young Muslim girl,

Zulaykhā Begum. Āzād compiled many treatises interpreting the *Qur'ān*, the *Hadīth*, and the principles of *Fiqh* and *Kalām*.¹²⁸

After his training in Islamic studies at *Makkah*, he returned to India and started learning western languages and sciences. As a result, he became more interested in the revolutionary anti-British forces and decided to work for the country and for the reform of Islam.

In 1912 he started a journal which took a clear stance against the pro-British politics of the 'Alīgarh group and was therefore, banned after sometime. He rendered relentless and valuable service in the Khilāfat and non-cooperation movements. He held several key executive positions in the congress till his death.¹²⁹

Schimmel has given a brief outline of Āzād's theology which she calls 'eclectic'. He held the view that all faiths are perfectly true in their own sphere and Islam is nothing more than a confirmation of the true faith taught by previous teachers and faiths. Rather Islam is the final form all previous faiths. The first volume of his *Tarjumān-al-Qur'ān*, which goes only as far as Sūrah 23, appeared in 1931, and this book is praised as a masterpiece of beautiful Urdu.

This work contains the theological expertise of Āzād in the extensive interpretation of *al-Fatiha*. Maulānā Āzād gives much thought to the role of man. "Man's nature is so high and elevated that nothing higher is conceivable to human reason". Schimmel sees a close similarity of this idea with the Tatvamasi of the Chandogya Upanishad as well as with the famous Ḥadīth, who knows himself, knows his God'. Āzād was proud of being an Indian and a Muslim. He was deeply concerned with the future of his co-religionists and of India in general.¹³⁰

In this respect *al-Hilāl'* was more unique, its founder and editor Maulānā 'Abul Kalām Āzād "spoke in a new language" different in thought, approach and even its texture. His "style was tense and virile.... He used new phrases for new idea" and contributed a lot to the Urdu language, giving it a definite shape. He joined the Muslim league at this first session in 1906, but soon became disillusioned and came under the influence of Maulānā Shibli. In the beginning his theme was Islamic and anti-British and he expressed in powerful language the ideas of patriotism, freedom and sacrifice unsurpassed by any Muslim leader during those days. His writings had a tremendous influence on the mind of the young Muslims but there were

people of older generation also who approved of his ideas and *Shaykh -ul-Hind* is reported to have said, “We were sleeping, Āzād has roused us from our slumber”.¹³¹

Mawlānā Āzād was never against western education, but he was a nationalist. He loved India and its people. Once he said, “From the beginning of my political life I was convinced that the Indian Muslims must participate in the movement for emancipation and work towards that end through the national congress. It should, however, be remembered that Mawlānā Āzād’s nationalism passed through various changing phases. He participated with full earth in the Khilāfat movement; but it is significant to note that while the whole of Muslim India was shocked at the abolition of Khilāfat by Mustafā Kamāl Atāturk and Mawlānā Muḥammad ‘Alī reacted strongly and indignantly against it, he did not say even a single word against the Kemalist revolution.”¹³²

On February 19, 1958, Abul Kalām Āzād became the target of paralytic attack. First aid was readily given but he remained unconscious. Eminent doctors tried to bring him back to consciousness but he left this mortal world on February 22, and was buried between Jāmi’ā Masjid and Red fort.¹³³

Āzād's education had been shaped for him to become a cleric, but his rebellious nature and affinity for politics turned him towards journalism. He established an Urdu weekly newspaper in 1912 called *Al-Hilāl* and openly attacked British policies while exploring the challenges facing common people. Espousing the ideals of Indian nationalism, Āzād's publications were aimed at encouraging young Muslims into fighting for independence and Hindu-Muslim unity. His works helped improve the relationship between Hindus and Muslims in Bengal, which had been soured by the controversy surrounding the partition of Bengal and the issue of separate communal electorates.

With the onset of World War I, the British stiffened censorship and restrictions on political activity. Āzād's *Al-Hilāl* was consequently banned in 1914 under the *Press Act*. Āzād started a new journal, the *Al-Balāgh*, which increased its active support for nationalist causes and communal unity. In this period Āzād also became active in his support for the Khilafat agitation to protect the position of the Sultan of Ottoman Turkey, who was the Caliph for Muslims worldwide. The Sultan had sided against the British in the war and the continuity of his rule came

under serious threat, causing distress amongst Muslim conservatives. Āzād saw an opportunity to energise Indian Muslims and achieve major political and social reform through the struggle. With his increasing popularity across India, the government outlawed Āzād's second publication under the *Defence of India Regulations Act* and arrested. The governments of the Bombay Presidency, United Provinces, Punjab and Delhi prohibited his entry into the provinces and Āzād was moved to a jail in Ranchi, where he was incarcerated until 1 January 1920.

Legacy and influence

Āzād is remembered as amongst the leading Indian nationalists of his time. His firm belief in Hindu-Muslim unity earned him the respect of the Hindu community and he still remains one of the most important symbols of communal harmony in modern India. His work for education and social upliftment in India made him an important influence in guiding India's economic and social development.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs of the central Government of India setup the Mawlānā Āzād Education Foundation in 1989 on the occasion of his birth centenary to promote education amongst educationally backward sections of the Society. The Ministry also provides the Mawlānā Abul Kalām Āzād National Fellowship, an integrated five-year fellowship in the form of financial assistance to students from minority communities to pursue higher studies such as M. Phil and Ph.D.

Numerous institutions across India have also been named in his honour. Some of them are the Mawlānā Āzād Medical College in New Delhi, the Mawlānā Āzād National Institute of Technology in Bhopal, the Mawlānā Āzād National Urdu University in Hyderabad, Maulānā Āzād Centre for Elementary and Social Education (MACESE Delhi University) the Mawlānā Āzād College in Kolkata, the Mawlānā Āzād Library in the 'Alī garh Muslim University in 'Alī garh and Mawlānā Āzād Stadium in Jammu. He is celebrated as one of the founders and greatest patrons of the Jamia Millia Islamia. Āzād's tomb is located next to the Jāmi'a Masjid in Delhi. In recent years great concern has been expressed by many in India over the poor maintenance of the tomb. On 16 November 2005 the Delhi High Court ordered that the tomb of Mawlānā Āzād in New Delhi be renovated and restored as a major national monument. Āzād's tomb is a major landmark and receives large numbers of visitors annually.

Jawaharlal Nehru referred to him as *Mīr-i- Kāravān* (the caravan leader), "a very brave and gallant gentleman, a finished product of the culture that, in these days, pertains to few". "The Emperor of learning" Mahatma Gandhi remarks about Āzād counting him as "a person of the calibre of Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras".

Āzād was portrayed by actor Virendra Razdan in the 1982 biographical film, *Gandhi*, directed by Richard Attenborough.¹³⁴

The Major Works of Maulānā ‘Abdul Kalām Āzād

Tarjumān-ul-Qur’ān: Although the work is incomplete but it contains:

1. High literary standard
2. Distinguished literary status of Mawlānā
3. Unique position of Mawlānā among Indian scholars of Islam and thinkers
4. Complete command over Arabic (which was his mother-tongue), Persian and Urdu

This work is counted as one of the finest translations of the Qur’ān. His Urdu style, his diction are unique and incomparable. His prose is possessed with the charm of poetry and lyricism. His language touches the heart and delights literary sensibility. Every word seems to be irreplaceably chosen. Some parts of his interpretative notes on *Surah-i-Fātiḥah* are the examples of the best Urdu prose. Mawlānā regarded this beautiful creation to be popularly comprehensible but the fact is that his work can really be understood and appreciated by the educated elite alone. The first edition of the first volume was published by Jayyad Barqi press, Delhi, in C.E. 1931 (A.H. 1350), containing translations of *Surah-i Fātiḥah* to Surah *al-An’ām* Madinah Baarqi press, Bijnaur, published the second volume, which contains translation of *Surah al-A’rāf* to *Surah al-Muminūn*, in C.E. 1936 (A.H. 1355). Mawlānā Ghulām Rasūl Meher compiled a third volume from the translations of the Quranic verses acatterd in the various essays and articles of Mawlānā Āzād and published it under the title “*Bāqiyāt-i-Tarjumān-ul-Qur’ān*. *Tarjuman-ul-Qur’ān* was then published by Sahitya Academy, Delhi, in four volumes.¹³⁵

Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf Rahmānī

The personality of Mawlānā Abd al-Ra‘ūf Rahmānī Jhanda Nagari, due to its unprecedented numerous religious, and social services, does not stand in the need of any introduction.¹³⁶

Khatīb-al-Islam Mawlānā ‘Abdur Ra‘ūf Rahmānī was among those great scholars and high thinking intellectuals of the twentieth century whose existence serves as a sign of goodness for the Islamic community. He was an eminent scholar, convincing speaker, unprecedeted orator, eloquent preacher, writer of dozen of books, good litterateur, an unique journalist, highly qualified administrator, successful teacher, a reliable explainer of Qur’ān and Sunnah, an undisputed heir to the antiquity, an unselfish servant of the community and a man of numerous capabilities.¹³⁷

The family of Mawlānā Rahmānī is of Indian descendant, inhabited in the village of Daulatpur, Gonda that forms the part of eastern Uttar Pradesh contiguous to Nepal. The village Kudar Bhitwa was inhabitants by the non- Muslims, when Ni‘matullah bought it and obtained the *Zamindari* rights from a Tharo household, so, the question of any mosque’s existence does not arise before his arrival to the village. Having acquired the *Zamindari* rights over the village, he constructed a mosque there and appointed a preacher to perform the prayers as well as teaching the children in the precincts of the mosque. Hence, Mālik ‘Alī a resident of Latiya, a village in Domaryaganj district was the first teacher to be appointed for this purpose, under whose guidance Mawlānā Rahmānī completed his elementary education.¹³⁸

Meanwhile Ni‘matullah laid the foundation of Madrasa *Sirājul ‘Ulūm* at Jhanda Nagar, Nepal in C.E. 1914. Maulānā joined this Madrasa in C.E. 1917 and learned elementary Arabic and Persian here under the aegis of Mawlānā Muḥammad Khalīl. Mawlānā Khalīl was also famous for inflicting corporal punishments on non-serious students. However, undoubtedly it was the punishment and disciplinary castigations of these kind and affectionate teachers that helped immensely in shaping the personality and broaden the mind of Mawlānā Rahmānī who twinkled as a bright star of the knowledge in later times. After five years stay here, Mawlānā Rahmānī took admission at *Jāmi‘a Rahmāniyya*, Banaras in C.E. 1922, where he found an excellent opportunity to benefit from the great scholars of the time like Mawlānā Habībullah, Mawlānā Fasīhuddīn, Qārī Ahmad Sa‘īd and Mawlānā Muḥammad

Munīr Khān. He studied here *Hidāyah-al Nahw*, *Al-Kaziah*, *Al-Qudūrī*, along with *Hadīth*, logic and philosophy. Unfortunately, his mother fell ill and he had to come home, but he did not discontinue his studies. By living in Jhanda Nagar, he studied *Al-Tirmizi*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *Jalālayn*, *Muqāimat-i-Harīrī*, *Sharah-al-Wiqaya*, *Nūr-al-Anwar*, logic, philosophy and *Al-Mutanabbi* etc. from Mawlānā ‘Abdul Gafūr and Mawlānā ‘Abdur Raḥmān Baydhawī.

Mawlānā Raḥmānī elevated his thirst of knowledge by availing the golden opportunity at *Dār-al-Hadīth*, Delhi, to benefit from the renowned scholars of India for example he learned the lesson of *Muwatta* of *Imām Mālik* from Shaykh -al-Hadīth Mawlānā ‘Ubaidullah Raḥmānī, logic, philosophy, Principles of *‘Ilm-al- Kalām* and *Al-Sahīh Al-Bukhārī* from Mawlānā Nazīr Aḥmad Raḥmānī, Mawlānā Sikandar ‘Alī Hazārawī, Mawlānā Abdussalām Durrānī and Mawlānā Aḥmadullah Partabgarhī respectively. In 1931 after being thought and trained by these eminent scholars, he obtained the certificate of *Fadīlat* from *Dār-al-Hadīth Rahmāniyya Delhi*.

Mawlānā Raḥmānī was much hard working person, used to spend his entire time in learning the lessons, solving imbrogues of the text and understanding the issue and matters raised during class times. He himself said, “Whenever I slipped out of the precincts of Madrasa I went to the areas between Jama Masjid and Red Fort, where I bought small affordable books of Christian priests and studies them to get access to their perceptions”.

The perception and excellence which Mawlānā Raḥmānī was blessed with by Almighty Allah was the result of his incessant diligence, perpetual trials and early training provided by Ni‘matullah, his father, who admitted him into the reputed Madrasas of the time and by acknowledging the responsibility, he regularly wrote letters to the teachers requesting them to give him special training. Beside this, the entire letter written to Maulānā Raḥmānī by his kind father contains a large number of valuable advices.¹³⁹

The teachers as well as administration of *Dār-al-Hadīth Rahmāniyya*, Delhi was much impressed by the qualitativedative educational abilities of Mawlānā Raḥmānī even during his student hood. When he completed his education by 1932, he ultimately joined Jaāmi‘a *Rahmāniyya* Banaras and stayed there for nearly two and half years. In 1936 again relinquished the service and returned home. Now, he was

appointed the vice secretary of *Madrasa Sirāj al ‘Ulūm*, where he engaged himself in the teaching and compilation of the books besides working for the stability and consolidation of financial department and construction of buildings and renovation of damaged one.¹⁴⁰

Mawlānā Rahmānī had built a double stroyed building in eastern part of Jhanda Nagar, where the teaching had also been started. Suddenly in 1947 the king of Nepal issued an ordinance for its demolition due to its location on an illegally occupied land and without due process of law. Unfortunately, Mawlānā was out of station at that time. Mawlānā was informed by letter and he immediately arrived here, met influential persons like Ḥakīm Maqbūl Ahmād, Shukrullah and the then secretary Ishāq Khān, and reached the conclusion to visit the royal court and approach the king himself for the cancellation of the order, but none of them befriended him for the cause. They revealed that when the king himself has ordered for such an action, it shall be wastage of time and money to travel to Kathmandu and return without any fructuous result, Mawlānā Rahmānī got troubled. He has spent many years collecting funds for its construction and now within few days it was going to be demolished. However, he did not lose the courage, and met Shuru Bābā a veteran person in the society who accompanied him to Kathmandu for the cause. Bearing the difficulties and hardships of the travel, as the means of transportation were not advanced, they reached Kathmandu and met Khwāja Muḥammad Hasan. There who advised him to approach the Indian leaders and request them to please write recommendatory letters to the king for the purpose and bring advertisements in those newspapers that reach the royal court regularly requesting to revise his earlier ordinance for the demolition. Accordingly, Mawlānā Rahmānī immediately sent Mawlānā ‘Abdus Samad to Delhi entrusting him with the same responsibility, and he himself wrote letters to Mawlānā Hifzur Rahmān and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Majid Daryabadī. Thus Mawlānā ‘Abdus Samad succeeded in prompting Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru to write his recommendatory letter to the king. The other hand many advertisements also got published for the same cause which ultimately resulted in the cancellation of the demolition order. Ordinance was issued by the king in Nepali language whose words are being recited till present date *Aagahi Khadak Nishaz Bamajimghar Bachkawane pare gharna Bhajkawe* (the earlier ordinance for the demolition of the Madrasa is being cancelled with immediate effect).

After reaching, Jhanda Nagar surveyed the whole region and met the authorities who scrutinized the original ordinance and permitted for the reconstruction of the building on the previously occupied lands. There is no denying the fact that it was a great achievement not only of Mawlānā but of Muslims also who got the orders of demolition reversed by a non-Muslim king. Whereas at that time when the non-Muslims were so much hostile to the Muslims and their establishments. People greeted Mawlānā Rahmānī on his grand successful mission. Mawlānā Rahmānī collected once again financial funds over the time and constructed a new Madrasa at the same place. Regarding this story, Mawlānā himself said that “I used to recite the Holy Qur’ān till its end and after every three days, pray Almighty Allah by shedding tears that ultimately bore fruits and he made me succeeded in my goal.”¹⁴¹

Undoubtedly, Mawlānā Rahmānī was solemnly committed for the cause of Madrasa progress and his very abilities were being nurtured for its development and consolidation. According to Mawlānā ‘Abdul Ḥamīd Rahmānī “he was legendary “Majnu” for the “Laila” of Madrasa *Siraj al-Ulūm*”. But since the evolution of human beings there have always been some malice ridden person and fast opponent for every great leader, unselfish reformer and veteran builder of the community. Therefore, Mawlānā also did not keep himself safe from ravages of the time. His rivals often pointed out only laxities in order to abdicate him from sole management of the Madrasa. Meanwhile they succeeded in convincing other persons having the same outlook. Consequently, Mawlānā was compelled to retire from his services and take refuge into his ancestral home “Kudar Bhitawa” Nepal. Abstaining from the active management of Madrasa, he played attention towards the compilation. Thus, it was the time when he penned down an academic dissertation that later published in the form of a book entitled *Siyanatul-Hadīth*.¹⁴²

It was the first time in C.E. 1977 that a pagan land like Nepal had been echoing with the pious thoughts of *Hadīth* collections. This invaluable achievement of Mawlānā really deserves the golden words to be written with in the religious history of Nepal.¹⁴³

Mawlānā Rahmānī Jhanda Nagri established many Madrasas and mosques in different regions, some of them as being named here: Chanrauta, a village twenty km away from Jhanda Nagar situated in its north, where Mawlānā bought a great piece of land for the construction of a Madrasa and mosque. Further, on the land contiguous

on the national highway, he built a double storied building comprising of twenty-five rooms mainly to collect money to meet the financial expenses of Madrasa by giving it on rent. The Madrasa established here is named *Zia-al-‘Ulūm*. Likewise, at Kheri, a village contiguous to Chanrauta, which is hardly inhabited by ten to twelve Muslim households, Mawlānā caused for the establishment of a Madrasa and Mosque there. This, Madrasa is affiliated to the Madrasa of Jhanda Nagar. In the same way, Bhairahwa -a reputed commercial centre of central Nepal, situated in the district of “*Rupandehi*”, had no Madrasa or mosque affiliated to the “*Salafi Muslim*”. where Mawlānā Rahmaani after due consultation with Mawlānā Shafiqur Rahman and Babu Mohar ‘Alī , bought a piece of land and built a Madrasa and a magnificent mosque there, which is imparting religious tenets in the region and hundreds of students are being adorned with the ornaments of education. This Madrasa is only one centre of learning for the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Muslims. Likewise, some religiously conscious residents of Taulihwa advised Mawlānā Rahmani, since, the village occupies a strategic position in the district and there is a chunk of Muslim population affiliated to *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Muslims without any Madrasa or the mosque. Mawlānā welcomed the advice and started the construction of Madrasa and mosque there after buying a piece of land. Meanwhile, the government interrupted the work and stayed the construction till further orders. After going through the matters it was held that some infidels has complained the HomeMinistry that many Madrasas as well as religious establishment are being run and much more are being established by him day by day without any prior approval and due permission of the government. How, he could have managed to afford such outlays? His personal properties along with funded and donated from abroad collections should be officially scrutinized. A show cause notice was issued by the office of Home Ministry to give a satisfactory reply within a week failing which a legal procedure shall be initiated against him. However, Mawlānā Rahmānī managed to overcome this prone to disastrous situation by means of his political and diplomatic understandings and the stay order was legally removed. Mawlānā Rahmānīwas wedded to the desire for the establishment of Madrasa as and mosques in every nook and corner of the villages, so, that the illiteracy and ignorance specially pertaining to the religious tenets may be removed, and the whole community and society get enlightened and rationalized.¹⁴⁴

One of the important purposes behind the establishment of “*Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth*” was the purifications of Muslim’s believes along with the reformation of their religious tenets. Although, Mawlānā Rahmānī remained committed to it for his lifetime and being practically involved in its activities left behind inspirational credentials for the offspring, there was no such foundation, entrusted wholly with the task. Therefore, in C.E. 1989, he invited a delegation of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* scholars from far-flung areas of India and abroad and next day after deliberation; the “*Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” Nepal came into the existence. He devoted the remaining life for its development and remained its president nearly for ten years. He made a new effort to locate its office in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal and sent lakes of rupees for this purpose, but all this proved futile and the construction could not turn into a concrete building. His restless desire remained unfulfilled, which he worried about till his last breath.¹⁴⁵

These scholars and thinkers, invited to witness the function regarding the establishment of “*Jami‘at Ahl-i-Hadīth*” at Jhanda Nagar, include Mawlānā Muḥammad Hārun, Mawlānā ‘Abdul Khāliq, Mawlānā Manzūr Ahmad Madani, Mawlānā ‘Abdur Razzāq Madani, Mawlānā Nūr Muhammad , Muḥammad Ḥanīf Rahmānī, Prof. Ḥabībullah and advocate Iqbāl Ahmad Shāh etc. deserves special mention. By the gracefulness of Almighty Allah Mawlānā Rahmānī’s dream for the establishment of “*Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” Nepal turned into reality. Mawlānā Rahmānī was chosen its president while Mawlānā ‘Abdul Khāliq Salafī was entrusted with the responsibilities of its secretary general.

After having led “*Jami‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” established, Mawlānā immensely helped it function efficiently in the real sense. Thus, albeit his old age he attended the meeting of consultative committee Bahuri Bair Gon, Nepal and elective session Jhingudwa, Nepal , On October 27, 1998 C.E. and November 5 6, 1991 C.E respectively. When the need of financial assistance surfaced in order to build a president’s office of “*Jami‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” at Kathmandu, he devoted one lakh of rupees. However, this foundation could not leave an impressive imprint as was anticipated at its inception but, indeed, it helped in authentication of several Madrasas and binding the whole *Ahl-e-Hadīth* faith into a single thread.¹⁴⁶

The personality of Mawlānā Rahmānī had been much reputed before India’s freedom. Consequently, he found many excellent opportunities for the participation in

conferences and to take benefits of working under the aegis and supervision of the great humble scholars. Thus, in 1944 he participated in the annual session of All India *Ahl-e-Hadīth* conference in New Delhi as a speaker. It was the time when grand and magnificent personalities like the lion of Punjab Mawlānā Thanāullah Amritsarī, Mawlānā Ibrāhīm Sialkoti, Mawlānā Muḥammad ‘Abdul Qāsim Ṣayf Banarsi, Mawlānā Muḥammad Ismā‘īl , and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Wahhāb were leading the conference that ultimately instilled a feeling of severe attachment in his heart regarding this association. Mawlānā Thanāullah Amritsarī was well acquainted with the capabilities of Mawlānā Rahmānī and had close contact with him. When India achieved its long awaited freedom in 1947 and efforts began in order to reorganize the conference with new outlook Mawlānā Rahmānī was appointed the member of its constituent committee, when the establishment of “*Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” came into existence he was appointed its president. Mawlānā Rahmānī was endowed with the lifetime membership of central “*Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” and regularly, he participated in its programmers.

Accordingly, an ‘All India conference of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* ’, was organized on November 16,17,18,19, 1961at Naugarh a town in the district of Siddharth Nagar, U.P. with a great pomp and show. It was the first time in the annals of India that all the representatives from the valley of Kashmir to KanyaKumari and the western coastal plain of Gujarat to eastern deltaic plain of West Bengal were invited to witness the conference and participate in its deliberations. Undoubtedly, it was a kind of marvel to organize such a grand and pompous conference in a small town like Naugarh. The memory of this pompous conference is still unfaded in the minds of the people. The great mentionable achievement of this conference was the establishment of *Dar-Al-‘Ulūm Jāmi‘a Salafiyya Banaras*, which was indeed reflection of the efforts of Mawlānā Rahmānī and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Jalīl Rahmānī. Mawlānā Rahmānī had a great zeal in the organizational activities of the conference once the scheduled date was announced in order to make it a grand success. Mawlānā Rahmānī himself offered a subvention of Rs. 17000 that was a substantial amount at that time. Mawlānā Rahmānī was appointed the president of welcome committee; therefore, he delivered welcome speech on the eve of the conference.

There is no denial of the fact that the Conference held at Naugarh proved to be a renaissance for *Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth*, India. All the scholars became active to

preach the teaching of the Qur'ān and Sunnah in different parts of the country and a sense of awaking arose in every individual affiliated to Jami'at for the cause. Further, the establishment of central institution *Jāmi'a Salafiyya Banaras* came into being, which later proved to be a centre of enthusiasm and dynamism for the predecessors.¹⁴⁷

Jāmi'a Salafiyya Banaras was established as an institute of learning of Mawlānā Rahmānī's plan pertaining to establishment of *Jāmi'a Salafiyya* before the conference held at Naugarh in 1961 because Mawlānā had already voiced for its establishment even before India's freedom. Ultimately, the conference of Naugarh provided a good platform to incentivize his proposals.

The establishment of Madrasa *Jāmi'a Salafiyya Banaras* proved to an invincible fort with regard to the protection of *Jamī'at Ahl-e-Hadīth* interests. Since its inception till now, it had played an important role in undertaking educational research, furnishing compilation and promoting "*Ahl-e-Hadīth*" faith. That is why, Mawlānā Rahmānī whole-heartedly so inclined this institution to such an extent that always thought for its further development and consolidation. He often used to express his unselfish love for it in ceremonies and regard it enviable ideal for Indian Muslims. It be Jamia Salafia Varanasi or "*Jamī'at Ahl-e-Hadīth*" India, he always remained attached with for one or more reasons till he breathed his last. Mawlānā always remained its member except few last days of his life and used to participate in its deliberations. He used to deliver speeches in its different inaugural and foundational ceremonies.¹⁴⁸

Joining of the World Assembly of Muslim League Makkah is a representing organization of Islamic world, established by Shāh Sa'ūd Nurullah. It occupies a distinguished position among the world Islamic communities. It is entrusted with the task of providing financial assistance to the deprived sections of the Muslims, building mosques and religious establishments, favouring orphans, demonstrating against oppression and injustice inflicted on Muslims around the world and preparing a common platform in order to redress their grievances etc. great academicians as well as educationalist some of them are as follows:

1. Mr. 'Abd al-Azīz bin 'Abdullah bin Bāz
2. Al-Shaykh Muḥammad bin 'Abdullah Al-Sabīl
3. Al-Shaykh 'Abdullah 'Alī Al-Mawlawī

4. Al-Shaykh Sayyid ‘Abdul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī
5. Mufti Muḥammad Yūsuf

It was in 1978 C.E., when Mawlānā Rahmānī attended the session of Legislative Assembly for the first time and delivered a convincing speech in accordance with advice of the Joint Secretary General Mr. Saqa al-Amīnī, in which he expressed concern regarding heretical and wicked beliefs of Nepali Muslims. Mawlānā Rahmānī due to his educational, academic and missionary services remained attached with the different religious and social organizations of India and abroad. Some of them are as follows:

1. *Central Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth, Delhi, India*
2. *Central Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth, Nepal*
3. *All Nepal Reformatory Organization, Kathmandu, Nepal*
4. *Central Institution Salafia, Banaras, India*
5. *District wise Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadīth, Gonda, India*
6. *Al-Mahad-al-Islami, Taulihwa, Nepal*
7. *Religious Educational Council, U.P., India*
8. *World Islamic Communication Network, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.*¹⁴⁹

His style of reciting verses of the Holy Qur’ān was rare and so unique. Occasionally, he used to quote the poetries of Akbar Allahabadi and Altāf Ḥusayn Hālī in such a magnificent way that listening crowd gets enraptured and unravel the historical stories in such a splendid style that a situation like delectable atmosphere get evolved the entire crowd get highly engrossed and fascinated. He had a broad study of the books like *Al-Muaqqīn* and *Sifat al-Safwah* of ‘Allāma Ibn-e-Qayyim Jauzi, *Siyar al-A‘lām-al-Nubla*, *Tazkerat-al-Huffāz* and *Tarīkh-e-Baghdad* of ‘Allamā Dhahabī, *Tarīkh-e-Damascus* of ‘Allāma Ibn-e-Asākir, and *Hayāt-al-Haywān* of Allama Dameeri etc. to such an extent that while speaking, he used to quote them along with their page numbers so accurately that he himself was a kind of flourishing library. This was the reason behind the popularity and appreciation of his speeches that evolved a sense of rational thinking among scholars as well as common people. Further, he had an enviable understanding and praise worthy hold over academic heritage of Islamic historians and pious predecessor’s antiquities that can be aptly inferred by the review of Mawlānā Mukhtār Ahmad Nadwī, which he wrote in the

newspaper “*Ahl-e-Hadīth* ” after being impressed by his speech delivered in a pompous session of Kolkata. He wrote:

“Although, we were sitting in the academic ceremony of Kolkata, perhaps, we were carried in the court of ‘Allāma Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim and Ḥāfiẓ Ibn-e-Kathīr etc. He indeed had left their juice squeezed down hundreds of thousand times”.¹⁵⁰

In 1992 C.E., the envisioned erudite Mawlānā Rahmānī caused for the release of monthly magazine “*Al-Sirāj*” in order to make the preaching services more widespread. This magazine is in fact precursor of Salafism and reliable and fearless interprets of the holy Qur’ān and Sunnah. It immensely helped Islamic journalism flourish better. It contained articles pertaining to the consolidation of Sunnah and repudiation of heresy and un-Islamic practices prevalent in the subcontinent .Moreover, research oriented articles, paper of historical and academic importance and other scholastic dissertations are regularly published in order to cater the curious minds of the scholars. This magazine acquires a prominent position not only in the subcontinent India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh but also in Urdu speaking regions of Arab and some European countries.¹⁵¹

Finally, this great soul passed on November 20 C.E. 1999/ 21 Shaban 1420 A.H. after the prayer of *Maghrib* at 6:20 P.M in the confines of *Jāmi‘a Sirāj al-‘Ulum al-Salafiyya Jhanda Nagar*, Nepal. He was 98 years old.¹⁵²

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137 Rahmani, Abdur Rauf, *Sarguzasht-e Jamia, Jamia Siraj Ulum Jhandanagar Nepal ke Nasheb-o-Farazke Dastan* Vol-I 1914-1977 Jamia Siraj al-Ulum al-Salafia Jhandanagar Nepal, preface by Maulānā Shamim Ahmad Nadwi, March 2013, p. 19.

138 *Tazkera-e-Neymat*, pp. 39-40. The father of Maulānā Rahmānī was no more sympathetic in the matter of education and training; he rather treated no leniency in this matter to the students. He used to mention as if the sayings of Shaykh Sadi Shirazi:

"The student who is not conversed with the rough and harsh attitude of his teacher in receiving the education and training would be trapped by the atrocities and sufferings of the time income"

139 *Al- Siraj, Magazine* Jamia Siraj al-Ulum al-Salafia Special Issue on *Khatib al-Islam*, pp. 93-95.

140 *Ibid.*,pp. 97,98.

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150 *Al Tauyiah Monthly* New Delhi, November 1987, p. 33, See his article "About My own self" This impression about the oration of Maulānā Rahmaī was written by Maulānā Mukhtar Ahmad Nadwi in the *Ahl-e-Hadīth Akhbar*

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CHAPTER - SIX

ESTABLISHMENT OF PROMINENT *AHL-E-HADITH* MADRASAS IN INDIA AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE MUSLIM SOCIETY

Education in Islamic History

From the very earliest days of Islam, the issue of education has been at the forefront at the minds of the Muslims. The very first word of the Qur'an that was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) was, in fact, "Read". Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) once stated that "*Seeking knowledge is mandatory for all Muslims.*" With such a direct command to go out and seek knowledge, Muslims have placed huge emphasis on the educational system in order to fulfil this obligation placed on them by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessing be upon him).

Throughout Islamic history, education was a point of pride and a field Muslims have always excelled in. Muslims built great libraries and learning centres in places such as Baghdad, Cordoba, and Cairo. They established the first primary schools for children and universities for continuing education. They advanced sciences by incredible leaps and bounds through such institutions, leading up to today's modern world.

Attitudes towards Education

Today, education of children is not limited to the information and facts they are expected to learn. Rather, educators take into account the emotional, social, and physical well-being of the student in addition to the information they must master. Medieval Islamic education was no different. The great Islamic scholar Imām Ghazālī also noted that "prevention of the child from playing games and constant insistence on learning deadens his heart, blunts his sharpness of wit and burdens his life. Thus, he looks for a ruse to escape his studies altogether." Instead, he believed that educating students should be mixed with fun activities such as Puppet Theatre, sports, and playing with toy animals.

The First School

Ibn Khaldūn states in his *Muqaddimah*, “It should be known that instructing children in the *Qur’ān* is a symbol of Islam. Muslims have, and practice, such instruction in all their cities, because it imbues hearts with a firm belief (in Islam) and its articles of faith, which are (derived) from the verses of the *Qur’ān* and certain Prophetic traditions.”

The educational institutions of the Islamic world were quite informal. Mosques (*Masājid*) were used as a meeting place where people can gather around a learned scholar, attend his lectures, read books with him/her, and gain knowledge. Some of the greatest scholars of Islam learned in such a way, and taught their students this way as well. All four founders of the Muslim schools of law – Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik, Shāfi‘ī, and Ibn Ḥanbal – gained their immense knowledge by sitting in gatherings with other scholars (usually in the mosques) to discuss and learn Islamic law.

Some schools throughout the Muslim world continue this tradition of informal education. At the three holiest sites of Islam – the Ḥaram in Makkah, *Masjid al-Nabawī* in Medinah, and *Masjid al-Aqsa* in Jerusalem – scholars regularly sit and give lectures in the mosque that are open to anyone who would like to join and benefit from their knowledge. However, as time went on, Muslims began to build formal institutions dedicated to education.¹

Modern History

The tradition of *Madrasas* and other classical forms of Islamic education continues until today, although in a much more diminished form. The defining factor for this was the encroachment of European powers on Muslim lands throughout the 1800s. In the Ottoman Empire, for example, French secularist advisors to the sultans advocated a complete reform of the educational system to remove religion from the curriculum and only teach secular sciences. Public schools thus began to teach a European curriculum based on European books in place of the traditional fields of knowledge that had been taught for hundreds of years. Although Islamic *Madrasa*s continued to exist, without government support they lost much of their relevance in the modern Muslim world.

Today, much of the former Ottoman Empire still runs education along European lines. For example, what you are allowed to measure in at the university

level depends on how you do on a certain standardized test at the end of your high school career. If you obtain the highest possible grades on the test, you can study sciences such as medicine or engineering. If one scores on the lower end of the spectrum, they are only allowed to study topics such as Islamic sciences and education.

Despite the new systems in place in much of the Muslim world, traditional education still survives. Universities such as *al-Azhar*, *al-Karaouine*, and *Dārul Ulūm* in Deoband, Madrasa Salafiyya, Benaras, and many others in India continue to offer traditional curricula that bring together Islamic and secular sciences. Such an intellectual tradition rooted in the great institutions of the past that produced some of the greatest scholars of Islamic history and continue to spread the message and knowledge of Islam to the masses.²

The History of Madrasa

The History of Madrasa in India dates back to the Establishment of Delhi Sultanate in 1206 C.E. Initially its principal function was to train persons for government service (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*) and accordingly curriculum was formulated to cater the administrative needs of Muslim rulers. Gradually with the patronage of these rulers it was extended to different parts of northern India. The claim of some Muslim thinkers that religious, rational and natural sciences were also introduced in the curriculum of Madrasa in India to meet the educational need of the time appears to be a myth. "Science flourished in the Golden Age of Islam because there was within Islam strong rationalist tradition, carried out by a group of Muslim thinkers known as *Mutazilite*".

The organisation of Madrasas in India and its working all along remained religion-centric. Subjects related to Islam continually dominated its curriculum in India ever since its inception. While carrying forward the legacy of Perso-Arabic educational thought, Indian Madrasas steadily propagated the conservative outlook and attitude of a larger section of Indian Muslims. Madrasa organisers in India never thought of how far its curriculum would be relevant in the changing environment. Greater importance on theological aspect of Islam in curriculum of Muslim education largely ignored the rational sciences. The religion-based education in these institutions gave birth to bigotry and became a major source of tension in Indian

society. There might have been strong rationalist tradition of Islamic education as claimed by Muslim educationists, but the Madrasas in India failed to keep pace with the fast changing modern social and educational environment.³

After the failure of 1857 revolt Muslim 'Ulama feared that the Muslim mode of life may got diluted due to western education introduced by British. Their immediate need was to keep a check on the possibility of their community moving towards modern education and ensure to carry forward the Perso-Arab legacy, which was possible only through Madrasa education. They launched Madrasa movement by establishing an Islamic seminary known as *Dārul 'Ulūm* at Deoband in 1866 with a view to educate Indian Muslims with Islamic system of education. By the close of nineteenth century Madrasas like *Farangī Mahal* (Lucknow) and *Nadwat-ul-'Ulamā* (Lucknow) emerged as vibrant symbols for Muslim separatist movement in India.

Contrary to Deoband movement Sir Sayyid Ahmād a British loyalist launched Aligarh movement and "established *Madrasatul 'Ulūm* at Aligarh in 1873 for imparting education in modern branches of learning, which later became *Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College* and then Aligarh Muslim University." Being more realistic he tried to inspire Muslim society towards modern education. Sayyid Ahmād Khān, the founder of Aligarh Muslim University realized that the Madrasa syllabus unsuited to the present age and to the spirit of time. He criticised it for encouraging memorising rather than real understanding.⁴

With a view to fashioning the education policy exclusively for Indian Muslims, Sir Sayyid formed *All India Muslim Educational Conference* in 1886. It was in fact a part of Aligarh movement. Its basic aim was to fashion the education policy for Indian Muslims and encourage them towards the mainstream western education. Even today it continues to haunt the community with the ghost of alleged Hindu-biased education in government schools. This attitude of social exclusivism worked as catalyst in fostering Muslim communal consciousness and caused a major damage to Hindu-Muslim unity in the Indian sub-continent. Later it gave birth to two-nation theory. "Arguably, its contribution to ultimate partition of India, although not greatly evident on the surface of affairs, was not much less great than that of its most famous child, the All India Muslim League". This shows that a reformist like Sir Sayyid had no vision for India in which both the Hindus and Muslims could have a common education.

Deriving inspiration from both Deoband and Aligarh, other prominent Islamic seminaries like *Nadwatul ‘Ulamā* and *Jāmi‘a Millia* were later established in Lucknow and Delhi respectively. *Nadwa* introduced rational sciences and working knowledge of English in its courses of study but it's over emphasis on Arabic literature and Islamic History did not bring the desired result for its products in job market. *Jāmi‘a Millia* tried to combine Deoband and Aligarh in its educational thought but its religious character and obsession to Urdu language as medium of instruction remained a major obstacle for its recognition as a symbol of modern education.

Due to deep-rooted medieval attitude in the minds of Indian Muslims, these Islamic institutions also failed to transform the mind set of their students so that they could think independently for developing a critical perspective and analysing the life in a more meaningful manner suited to contemporary global environment. Accordingly *Nadwa* also remained as conservative as Deoband. *Jāmi‘a* however, accepted modern education to a considerable extent but its obsession to Urdu as medium of instruction could not bring its students at par with other modern educational institutions in the country as far as their job opportunity is concerned.

Though a section of Muslim thinkers supported the Aligarh Movement launched by Sir Sayyid as a positive response to western education, the largest majority of Muslim mass supported Deoband movement, which favoured Islam or religio-centric education. They strongly opposed the Aligarh movement launched by Sir Sayyid, who tried to inculcate modern and scientific education.

Even the contemporary rationalist Muslim thinkers, who talk about Islamic modernism, have hardly overcome their medieval attitude of intellectual subjugation. They have in fact ignored the real problem that how far Madrasa education would be relevant in contemporary social advancement of the country. Factually, there is hardly any difference between Madrasa education and modern education imparted by Muslim institutions like Aligarh Muslim University as far as the medieval attitude of their students is concerned. Madrasa education, which is basically for propagation of Islam therefore, always remained an inspiration for modern Muslim educational institutions.

Contrary to the secular education system formulated in India after Independence, Madrasas were promoted as major obstacles for Indian Muslims in taking the benefit of utilitarian concept of education, which is basically for the material progress of Indian society. They inculcated among Indian Muslims an obsession to education in purely Islamic environment, which kept them off from government schools. Thus, growth of *Makātib* (elementary religious schools) and Madrasas in different parts of the country also served as nucleus for sustaining a full-fledged movement in retaining a separate Muslim identity.⁵

Dār-ul-Hadīth Rahmāniyya (Delhi) (1921-1947 C.E.)

The need was felt to establish the *Dār-ul-Hadīth*, so that the movement of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* could be intensified. Another aim of this institution was to produce scholars, and preachers who could promote the teachings of the movement. In view of the above fact and direction of Mujāhid-e Islam Allāma ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Rahīm Ābādī (1337 A.H.), a popular businessman ‘Abdul Rahmān and his brother Shaykh ‘Atā-ur-Rahmān laid the foundation stone of this *seminary* in Delhi.⁶

The foundation of the Madarsa has been considered as an important incident in the development of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Movement. Mawlānā Qaḍī Muḥammad Aslam Ṣayf Firozpūrī in his book *Ahl-e-Hadīth Movement* has recorded this incident in detail. Amīr-e Mujāhidin Sufi ‘Abdullah Ābādī went to *Dār-ul-‘Ulūm-Deoband* (1933) just to get some Islamic knowledge from Mawlānā Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī. At that time Allāma was teaching the *Tirmizī Sharīf*. Sufi Ṣāḥab could not tolerate the reading of *Tirmizī Sharīf* by Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī and asked him that were he teaching *Tirmizī Sharīf* or rejecting it? On hearing this, few Afghan Student got angry and took the knives and started attacking the Sufi Ṣāḥab, because they felt that Sufi has insulted the Mawlānā Ṣāḥab. At that time Sufi Ṣāḥab Said, “that I am from Jamī‘at Mujāhidīn and have brought an important message for Mawlānā Ṣāḥab. If you harm me you will be responsible for the same.” However, Mawlānā Ṣāḥab got angry with Afghan Students and Sufi Ṣāḥab was sent to guest room. The Student who accompanied him said that there were about 60-70 *Ahl-e-Hadīth* students who studied there. Sufi Ṣāḥab asked the Students why don’t they join for education in *Madarsa Ahl-e-Hadīth*. The Students replied that *Ahl-e-Hadīth* Madarsa provided very limited accommodation. Shaykh ‘Abdul Rahmān (1921) and his brother Shaykh ‘Atā-ur- Rahmān (1938) were high Tradesmen of Delhi at that time. Sufi Ṣāḥab was continuously visiting Mujāhidīn and

was also visiting to Mawlānā ‘Abdul Raḥīm for financial and moral help. Sufī Ṣāḥab narrated the whole episode of *Dār-ul-‘Ulūm Deoband*. So on the recommendation of Sufī Ṣāḥab and Mawlānā ‘Abdul Raḥīm not only *Dar-ul-Hadīth Rahmāniyya* was founded but Shaykh ‘Abdul Raḥmān and his brother ‘Atā-ur-Raḥmān also got constructed a beautiful building.⁷

At that time Mawlānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Mīr Sialkotī was also carrying the Madrasa *Dār-ul-Hadīth*. When he came to know about opining of *Dar-ul-Hadīth Rahmāniyya*, he became very happy and shifted his Madrasa along with teaching Staff to the building of *Rahmaniyya*. As the name of the brothers end at Raḥmān, the Madrasa was named as “*Dar-ul-Hadīth Rahmāniyya*” here it is important to mention that Mawlānā Abū Yahyā has wrongly mentioned that date of foundation of this Madrasa as (1339), which is incorrect.

Giving the introduction of building Mawlānā Muḥammad Jūnāgarī in his fortnightly Journal (1941) has written that area of Madrasa is about 800-900 yard, comprising a big and beautiful building. There are about 35 rooms well ventilated for residential purpose. 8 big rooms for teaching purpose and there were electrified equipped with coting fans. In the north of Madrasa there is big hall meant for conduction of annual examination and other functions. A separate kitchen is also present. There is also a big library room in which thousands of Arabic and Urdu books are present for the Students. In the west of Madrasa there is big and beautiful *Masjid*. In between Madrasa and *Masjid* there is green ground for the physical exercise of the Students. In front of the Madrasa, different kinds of fruit plants have been planted, that yields a charming look.⁸

Mawlānā Ibrāhīm Sialkotī (1375 A.H.) was first teacher of this Madrasa. Others who rendered there services for the betterment of Madrasa include; *Shaykhul Hadīth* Mawlānā Ahmadullah Gudhi, Mawlānā Yahyā Kanpuri, Mawlānā ‘Abdul Raḥmān, Mawlānā ‘Abdullah Nadvī, Mawlānā Gafūr Jajpuri, Mawlānā ‘Abdullah Lukhnavi, Mawlānā Abdul Hakīm Nāzim, Mawlānā Muḥammad bin Yūsuf Sūrtī, Mawlānā Sikandar ‘Alī Hazarwi, Mawlānā Muḥammad Ishāq, Mawlānā Ahmad bin Mullah Hisāmmuddin, Mawlānā ‘Abdullah Raḥmānī Mubarakpuri etc.

There was exemplified co-ordination between teachers and taught in the Madrasa . Educational standard was so high; one can feel its impression in this time

also. When Rahmānī joined the Madrasa, the all mind success became eminent. That's why this Madrasa has become the centre for *Ahl-e-Hadīth* movement. It has given birth to various personalities of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* who have given boost to the movement in modern India.⁹

The Establishment of *Jāmi‘a Salafiyya*

The foundation of this important educational institution is not limited to a particular cause or motive. In fact it is the living example of sincere emotions and desperate longing of the Muslims of previous century that was stirring in their hearts for propagation of Islam and Islamic knowledge at a large scale.

History of the Madrasa:

The religious and cultural history of Muslims in India was superb and glorious. Upon inhabiting this part of earth, they highly safeguarded their religious and educational heritage and considered the propagation of Islam as well as the Arabic language, as their obligation. Then at the final stage when the political condition of Muslims got degenerated and their authority over the state terminated, the people fell prey to dejection and the Muslims minds were caught with endangerment of the religious and educational activities and endeavours. But Allah Almighty with his blessings generated the organization of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd Barailwi and Shāh Ismā‘il Shahīd during this era of dejection and decadence. And their organization left indelible marks of balance and sacrifice, on the pages of Indian history. And turned over the course of the society and waged a vehement struggle against the internal as well as external Colonial or imperialistic power and strongly contested it. After facing defeat in the Balakot, the members of this organization were disintegrated, who later on took recourse to the fields of Islamic education and propagation and these endeavours later on manifested satisfactory implications.¹⁰

In the aftermath of the partition of *Hindustan* the political, social and religious conditions of Muslims changed diametrically and strong impediments began to generate in the process of propagation of Islam. And such tribulations and disturbances evolved that endangered the very existence of Islam in India and the elimination of the religious, educational and cultural heritage of Muslims was taken by its enemies. To tackle such critical circumstances, Islamic organizations got arrayed and strived for the survival of the Islamic education in this country.

The insight full scholars and sincere devotees, the organization of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* or *Jami’at -i- Ahl-e-Hadīth* felt that the establishment of seminaries (Madāris/sing. Madrasa) is the solution for defending the detrimental attacks of the enemies of Islam against its religious, cultural and educational heritage. The purpose of such seminaries was to generate scholars who would be equipped with the necessary and imperative Islamic language of various fields to gather with the pure beliefs and doctrines of Islam. These perceptions lead to the movement of establishing Islamic seminaries throughout the length and breadth of the country. And from these strongholds of religion the Islamic scholars propagated Islamic message, together with promotion of Arabic language and defended Islam from its enemies (like Christian missionaries, Hindu and Qādianism/Ahmadiyya)¹¹

Since the standard of these seminaries was different and they were lacking any solid co-ordination, so a need arose to strengthen the religious and cultural relation with educational institutions and universities, together with extracting benefits of versatile educational research regarding the sciences of *Qur’ān* and Sunnah, from them.

So the *Jami’at-i-Ahl-e-Hadīth Hind* (which has been active in different fields since its establishment in 1906) decided to establish this Jāmi‘a or grand institution and to accomplish this goal certain people from Madanpora Banaras provided support. They dedicated certain parts of their property for the Jāmi‘a, so that in the coming period and it will serve as a destination of scholarly people as well as a centre for the learning of sciences of *Qur’ān* and Sunnah. Hence in A.H. 1383 *Jāmi‘a Salafiyya* was established which turned as a central seminary or “Central University of Islamic science” in India. And during A.H 1385 it started to offer education and by the grace of Almighty Allah and with the support of his sincere servants, it is persistently showing progress.

From this brief description it is manifest that though the establishment of this Jāmi‘a got delayed yet in accordance with its objectives and performance, it is not a novel, unusual and lagging institute. It is engaged in that invitation and propagation of Islam which was prevalent during the prophetic period and in the period of glorious Caliphate among the masses. And its main goal of this Jāmi‘a is to strive for the supremacy of Allah’s word and religion of Islam [in the world] for which our ancestors had also strived hard in their times. And the way followed by Shaykh al-

Islam Ibn Taymiyyah , Shaykh al-Islam Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al- Wahhāb and Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā‘īl Shahīd , for themselves is also followed by this Jāmi‘a and is following their footsteps in providing sincere sacrifice in the ways of invitation towards Islam (truth), and its propagation.¹²

The Stages/ Levels of Education in the `are as Follows:

Initial (*primary*), middle and Secondary levels, (*higher levels*) faculty of *Tawhid* and *Hifz-i-Qur’ān* (*phonetically recitation and Recollection of the Qur’ān*),

The main aims and Objectives of this *Jāmi‘a* are:

- To offer complete education of Quranic and Ḥadīth (Sunnah) Sciences.
- To provide education in Islamic religious sciences and Arabic language and literature, to gather with education in local and other foreign languages.
- To struggle for the preservation of educational and religious legacy of Muslims and propagation, persuasion and inducing temptation for learning Arabic among the people in India nd outside.
- To generate of an organization of sincere and insightful scholars who could propagate Islam to everyone in a right manner in an unbiased manner irrespective of religion and creed and who could provide crushing reply to the criticism made against Islam.
- To struggle against the polytheism and innovations and anti- religious customs. Purification of the society from the disbelief, superstitions and heretical thought that had crept among the Muslim masses.
- To create unity and integration among the Muslims and bring their modus operandi in complete consonance with *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah*, as it is the real basis of their esteem and elevation (in the world).¹³

The *Jāmi‘a* has been continually striving for the accomplishment of these objectives and believe that Allah will bless it with success in this field also.

Educational Curriculum / Syllabus:

The educational curriculum prevalent in Indian (Islamic) educational institutions is almost same. Some institutions have strived for bringing necessary changes and revivification in the age-old curriculum but it was accepted generally.

After full deliberation and consideration and taking lessons from the experience of the Madaris or seminaries, *Jāmi‘a Salafiyya* had framed a moderate type of curriculum that primarily focuses on the fundamental Subjects of *Tawhīd* (monotheism), *Tafsīr* (exegesis), *Hadīth* (Traditions), and *Tārīkh* (History), Arabic language and so on. And such that after completion of this course the graduates from this *Jāmi‘a* would be living embodiments of the doctrines based on *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah* as well as would be fully prepared for defending the modern day corruptions and tribulations.

Success of this educational curriculum is evident from the fact that the graduates from this *Jāmi‘a* who are learning in Arab countries particularly in *Jāmi‘a Islamia Madinah Munawwarah* and *Jāmi‘a al-Malik ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Makkah Mukkarramah*, have come up with promising results and many a times have topped the results.

The graduates of the *Jāmi‘a*, who could not afford to go to the foreign countries are perfectly observing their obligations in the field of education and propagation of Islam in a splendid and successful way.¹⁴

In India all the financial requirements and expenses over religious institutions and Seminaries (Madaris) are full filled by the Muslim masses. The peculiarity of these institutions (Madaris) is that they represent the only means of preserving the Islamic religious Sciences and promotion of Arabic language in India togather with connecting the Muslims with their glorious past.

In order to resolve the difficulties of the students and to raise the standard of their education, the *Jāmi‘a Salafiyya* has extended its relations with administrative bodies and different organizations and thanks to Allah Almighty its endeavours in this regard met with success and its affiliation with foreign Islamic universities got fortified and as a result it paved easy ways to its students for benefitting from these universities.¹⁵

Idārah al-Islāmiyya: Department of Islamic Research

For every society purposeful and virtuous literature forms the back-bone and it serves as important nourishment for mind and thought. But the irony of the current era is that the vicious and morally detrimental literature has severely deteriorated the

current generation and it has encouraged the indecency, immodesty, infidelity and heresy and materialism with in the modern generation.

The main reason for this is the heedlessness towards Islamic call, lack of virtuous literature and insufficiency of books regarding *Qur'an*, *Sunnah* and Islamic history and persistence and promotion of innovation and obscenity with in the Muslim masses.

To fill this void and liberate the human society from indecency, infidelity and heresy and sinfulness and impiety, (the department of Islamic Research) “*Idārah al-Islāmiyya*” has been established. The mean of this department is to familiarize people with the versatile and clear teachings of Islam togather with up-rooting the anti-religious (Islam) ideologies and doctrines and innovations and obscenity from the society. But up on deep deliberation and wide observation it can be felt that the endeavours made in the fields of education and propagation (of Islam) are insufficient and the circumstances demand much more integrated struggle and sincere sacrifice in this field .

Future Plans: At the very out set of working on this small area, the trustees of the *Jāmi'a* had felt about the extension of educational plans, but the difficulty of having a big piece of land did not allow to accomplish this aim. Thanks to Allah Almighty, this difficulty was also resolved and a fifty thousand metre square plot of land was purchased, which is some Ten Kilometres away from the current building in the outskirts of the city, in which following colleges and buildings related to it, will be built, *Inshallah* (if Allah wills); *Kulliyat al-Qur'an* –Department of Quranic Studies, *Shari'ah Studies* (Islamic Canon Law), *Kulliyat al-Luggat al-Arabiya*-Department of Language of Arabic. *Kulliyat al-Tib*- Department of Science of medicine. *Kulliyat al-Sanah- Wal-Minhaj*- Technical College. *Qāt-al- Muhādarāt*-Lecture hall. Library, *Idārah al-Buhūth-al Islāmiya*- Islamic research centre, *Jāmi'a Masjid*- Grand mosque, Quarters for Teachers, Boarding house, Hospital, Playground, offices of *Jami'a* , garden and Lawn.¹⁶

Preaching and Educational Conference:

Upon observing the circumstances prevailing in the current Muslim societies it becomes evident that neither there is peace and calm anywhere nor is any ray of hope regarding a bright future. The moral and civilizational values have undergone

decadence. The followers of Islam, themselves are involved in different and varied issues and problems. They have to face complicated impediments in the ways of education and preaching and at the same time a largest faction of Muslim *Ummah* (nation) is entrapped in different kinds of corruptions in faith and polytheistic activities. The shape of Islam which is recorded in the books of history and *Sīrat* (biography), is nowhere available is a perfect and pragmatic shape.

Upon a cursory look over the current day Muslim Society it becomes crystal clear that people are highly active in disbelief, Sinfulness and impiety and are drowned into the deepness of perversity and derailment from the right path. People have fallen prey to psychological anxiety and their life is devoid of peace and satisfaction at individual or Collective level. Muslims have been entrapped into the sayings and suggestions of people and are far from the crystal clear teachings of *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*. Since a large faction of them is involved in performing pilgrimages to the tombs of Saints for supplication and make offerings and present gifts and on different occasions their anniversaries are celebrated and fairs are arranged. And this all happens in the name of religion (Islam) and its elevated teachings. The pathetic thing that footprints of the ideals of goodness and blessedness and sacrifice in the ways of truth and benevolence that persisted in the Prophetic era and the era following it, are disappearing slowly and slowly.¹⁷

Such Circumstances in view, the *Jāmi'a* organized an important historical conference and assembled the Muslim intellectual learned class and pleaded them for having a keen deliberation over the subjects of invitation (towards Islam), preaching and education, so that after discussions world assist in formulating suitable solutions and would suggest a virtuous system and high standards and values of humanity for the whole humanity in general and the Muslims in particular. To gather with this the *Jāmi'a* expected from the participating intellectual and thoughtful class that they would collaborate and find such methods upon following which the mission of preaching Islam in India would be facilitated easily and under which the Islamic organizations would be compelled for this thing that they have to collaborate and with full honest and sincerity have to formulate a unique and solid pragmatic policy for spreading the mission of invitation or preaching of Islam and promote the education of Islamic religious sciences and Arabic language.

For the accomplishment of the aim two different committees have been framed namely committee of invitation or preaching (*Lijnat al-Dāwah*) and committee of education (*Lijnat al-Ta'līm*), the purpose of these committees is to deliberate over the subjects and issues related to above mentioned aim and to achieve real apt solutions and suggestions in this regard.

The historical conference of *Jāmi'a* hope that with the help of Almighty Allah the endeavours of the scholars ('Ulamā) will bear its fruits and from this auspicious conference Islam and its followers will be highly benefited.¹⁸

Jāmi'a has Collaborations with the following foreign Institutions:

Jāmi'a Islamiyya Madīnah Munawwarah, Idārat al-Buhūth al-Islāmiyya wa al-Iftā wa al-D'awat wa al-Irshād, Riyad. Kulliyat al-Sharī'ah Makkah al-Mukkarramah, Jāmi'a al-Imām Muhammād bin Sa'ūd al-Islamiyya, Riyad. Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-al-Shu'un al-Islamiyya, Markaz al-D'awat al-Islāmiyya, Qatar.

The trustee of the *Jāmi'a* had it in their consideration at the time of its establishment that the *Jāmi'a* would establish strong foundations of religious and educational ties with the Islamic world so that in addition to the integration in religion (Islam) and belief (*Aqīdah*), the integration in education and thought would remain sustained and the way of benefitting from each other would be easily furnished.

It is expected that this *Jāmi'a* will turn into a centre of education and training and will become the point of coalition of the international Islamic movements will be a strong hold of education in *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*.

There is deep aspiration and ambition regarding this institution that an atmosphere of mutual support and suggestion should be generated so that the people of the world would witness with their own eyes the domination and elevation of justice peace, tranquillity and higher standards of character and behaviour. And also would feel easy and the suppression of powers evil and mischievous forces to gather with the uproot of the seeds of brutality and cruelty.¹⁹

Jāmi'a Islāmiyya Salafiyya (Arabic College) (Helonarpam, Howly, Distt. Barpeta Assam, India):

Introduction

Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth was established in Assam in 1971 C.E., Mawlānā Habīb-ur-Rahmān has played a vital role in it. This was a wish of all the members of *Jamī‘at* to establish an Islamic Institution for a flury area. The dream of *Jamī‘at* became true, when in 1996 ‘Abdul Wahhāb Khaljī Nāzim and Shaykh Ḥafiz Ayn-ul-Bārī president of *Jamī‘at Ahl-e-Hadīth* west Bengal laid the foundation stone of this Institution “*Jāmi‘a Islamiyya Salafiyyaa*”. The Institution started proper functioning on 2001 C.E. with six experienced teachers and some students. In 2002 *Hifz* class was started. At this time 2 Ḥufāz and 11 other teachers were appointed for providing the moral and quality education among 145 Students.

In a very short period various religious personalities both Indian and outside India visited this *Jāmi‘a* and got satisfied with progress, and management of the Institution and have also provided their comments. Present building is sufficient keeping in view the enrolment of the students.²⁰

Historical Islamic Madarsa of North West India

Al- Jāmi‘at-ul- Salafiyya (Mewat)

Founder: Shaykh-ul-Islam Mawlānā Thanāullah Amritsarī, Mawlānā Ḥakīm ‘Abdul Shukūr Shukravi, Mawlānā ‘Abdul Jabbār, Mawlānā Dāwūd, Ḥafiz Hamīdullah Dehlawi.

Location: *Jāmi‘a Salafiyya* (Mewat) is located near Capital Delhi in Mewat Shukrwah. In which Students from Mewat, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujrat and UP etc. are getting education.

- In this *Jamī‘a*, students are enrolled for Arabic, formal and informal education. Thousands of students are getting education from this Madrasa.
- “*Kulliyātul-Al Banāt Al Islamiyya*” is branch of the *Jāmi‘a* for female students. In addition to part for modern education *Islamia High School* is also present.
- Proper water supply, proper sanitation modern residential hostel, playground hygienic food, and separate hostel for female students are also present. Efficient staff for teaching Arabic is also present which counts to 35.
- Total enrolment of *Jāmi‘a* is 700 in which 200 Students are setting religious education, free ration, free residence and free medicines are being provided to the Students.

- The Annual Budget of *Jāmi‘a* is also 10 lakh, which comes in from Donation by Zakat, charity, and *Ushr* and *Sadqa*.
- *Jāmi‘a* is administered by a proper governing committee for male and female students entitled as modern *Dār-ul-Akama* is going on.²¹

Jāmi‘a Dār-ul- Hudā (Yusuf Pur Sadharath Nagar, U.P)

Mawlānā Gāzī Sayyid Ja‘far ‘Alī Naqvī who was the important member of the movement. On his directorship Mawlānā ‘Abdullah founded the *Jāmi‘a Dār-ul-Al-Hudā* in 1854 C.E.

Jamia Darul Huda, at present followed the syllabus of Jamia Salafiyya, Benaras. They emphasized on the Arabic language, the Quranic studies including Tafsir and Ahadith. 31 experts used to teach, educate the students in the Madrasa.

Pilgrimage of Jami‘a : Nazīr Husayn Muḥaddith Dehlvi, Shaykh-ul-Islam Mawlānā Sanāulla Amritsari, and Mawlānā Muḥammad Junagarhi, Mawlānā Yūsuf Banarasi. Mawlānā Nazīr Aḥmad Rahmānī Amlavi, Shaykh-ul-Hadīth Mawlānā Abīdullah Rahmānī Rahīmullah.

Beneficiary of Jami‘a are: Mawlānā ‘Abdul Salām Bastavi, Mawlānā ‘Abdul Jalīl Rahmānī, Mawlānā ‘Abdul Rahīm Rahmānī, Mawlānā Abū Shahma Khān Rahmānī, Mawlānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Rahmānī, Dr. Abdul Quddūs Madani, Dr. Wasiullah ‘Abbas Madani, and Dr. ‘Abdul Wahhāb Madani. Safeguarding Islamic ideology in India is the prime aim of this *Jami‘a*.²²

Jāmi‘a Rahmāniyya, Monghyr , Bihar

This Madrasa was founded in 1927 at Monghyr, a district headquarter in north Bihar, on the lines of the *Dar ul – ‘Ulūm Nadwatul- ‘Ulamā* of Lucknow, by Mawlānā Muḥammad ‘Alī of Monghyri, one of the founders of the Madrasa, and named by him after Mawlānā Fadlur-Rahmān Ganj-Muradabadi, his spiritual guide and a great divine of the 19th century. It was, however, put on a sound footing by Shāh Minnatullah Rahmānī, the then *Amir-i-Sharī‘at* of Bihar state, who succeeded to head the *Khanqahi-i-Rahmani* in 1942. The Madrasa follows a 15 year course of study, in which six years are devoted to primary and the remaining nine, to higher education. In the three years of the higher classes, along with the fundamental Islamic sciences, subjects like history, geography, arithmetic, general science, Hindi and English are

taught. the remaining six years are devoted to extensive instruction in Islamic subjects like Arabic literature; a four year course leads to the '*Alim*' and to the next two years study to the *Fādil* degree, which is the highest degree awarded by this institution. In addition, there is a special course of one year's duration for instruction in Islamic learning and religious sciences like the *Qur'ān*, tradition, Islamic law and Islamic history to interested students of modern schools and universities. The students are served by a well-equipped library containing more than 13,000 titles in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Attached to the Madrasa is a boarding house providing board, lodge and other amenities. This Madrasa is also an affiliating body for other Madrasas in the region.

Dārul-'Ulūm Ahmadiyya Salafiyya, Laheria Sarai , Darbhanga, Bihar

This institution, the most important of its kind in Darbhanga district of Bihar, was founded by the great traditionist, Mawlānā 'Abdul 'Azīz Rahīmābādī, at Laheriasarai, in 1917, to establish a higher institution in Arabic. Now it also prepares students for the matriculation examination. The Madrasa is located in a spacious building spread over a vast area. It has a library of more than 5,000 books. It owns an electric press which prints a weekly, run by the institution, and other books.²³

Jāmi'a Dārus -Salām, Umerabad

South India proper has not lagged behind in the matter of instruction of Islamic learning. In the states of Kerala and Tamilnadu, apart from the departments at universities; there are a number of institutions imparting education in Arabic and Islamic subjects. The most outstanding of these, perhaps, is the *Dārus-Salām* at Umerabad, situated in a picturesque valley at a distance of about five kilometres from Ambur railway station in north district of Tamil nadu.²⁴

The *Dārus-Salām* was founded in 1924 by Hājī Kākā Muḥammad 'Umar, a businessman by profession, after whom the locality received its name, with the cooperation of some of his colleagues like Nawāb 'Abdul Ḥakim and his trade partner, Hājī J. 'Abdul Karīm of Ambur. Intended to impart education in *Qur'ān*, *Hadīth* and Islamic law, its most outstanding feature is that instead of giving education in any particular school of religious law, it has facilities for instruction in all the four schools of jurisprudence with a view to eliminate factional differences

and broaden the outlook of the students. The college has also facilities for teaching some modern subjects. The medium of instruction is Urdu.

The college is housed in an imposing double storeyed building of its own and has a hostel attached to it, which provides free board and accommodation to about 150 students. It has spacious play grounds and also runs a free Unani dispensary. The course of studies of the college is of 8 years duration and comprises commentary on the *Qur'an* and its principles, tradition (*Hadīth*) and its principles, jurisprudence and its principles, logic and philosophy, history and literature, all in Arabic, it also includes teaching of higher Persian. It prepares students for the matriculation examination and for diplomas in oriental learning of the University of Madras, to which it was affiliated in 1927 and for the degree course in Arabic of the same university, called *Afdal-ul 'Ulamā*.

The College plans to start a research and publication section and post graduate courses in different subjects. Education is free and books are also provided free of cost. There is a library attached to the institution: started by the founder's son, Hājī Kākā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm, who named it after his father "Umar Library", it has got a large number of valuable and rare books in Arabic, Persian, Tamil, English and Urdu. The total number of students on its rolls is 250, some of whom hail from foreign countries like Maldives, Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, etc.²⁵

The graduates, who use the suffix '*Umari*' to their names, are employed in various schools and colleges throughout south India, as teachers of Persian, Arabic and Islamic studies. Quite a few of them have made their names in the field of research and literature; the most outstanding of these is professor Muḥammad Yūsuf Kōkan 'Umarī, head of the department of Arabic and Islamic studies in the University of Madras. The college is run by a registered committee called *Jāmi'a Dārus Salām* committee and is financed from the income from endowments made for it, as also from subscriptions, donations and an annual grant from the government of Tamil Nadu.

Recently, the *Jāmi'a* has established an institute for introductory studies on Islam, which was inaugurated on 17 April 1977 by Shaykh Muḥammad Nāṣir Abudī, secretary general of the *Dārul-Iftā Wa Da'wah* of Saudi Arabia. The object of the institute is, among other things, to publish translations of Arabic books (religious) into

Urdu as well as Dravidian languages, particularly Tamil. The institute also aims to meet the challenges of the modern trends in the light of Islamic teachings.²⁶

Since its inception, *Jāmi‘a Dārussalām* Umerabad has produced hundreds of Islamic scholars who have spread across the world. Some among them have also gone ahead and completed their Masters and Ph.D. from world renowned universities like *Jāmi‘a Islāmiyya*, Madinah.²⁷

Jāmi‘a Dārussalām's campus is huge and lovely. There is a mosque within the campus that itself is a mark of beauty. It was built by a wealthy businessman from Gulf. Besides the mosque which is at the centre of the campus, many buildings extend over the entire area. The right side buildings on the campus are for children while the left side buildings are for higher studies. There is another mosque outside the campus which is also used for offering prayers. There are two huge playgrounds on the campus, one at the entrance while another behind the IT building. This IT building actually opens just for one month every year. IT isn't a mandatory subject for the students which is unfortunate.²⁸

Jāmi‘a Muḥammadiyyah Arabiyya, Raidurg, Anant Pur, (Andhra Pradesh)

This institution was started about fifty years ago, at Raidurg in Anantpur district of Andhra Pradesh, under the auspices of a local organization called *Anjuman-i-Muḥammadiyyah*, founded by Mawlānā Ismā‘īl. It provides instruction in elementary Urdu, Islamic sciences and oriental learning on the lines of the *Dar ul-Ulūm* of Umerabad and also prepares students for the various diplomas and degree in oriental learning, including *Afdal ul-‘Ulamā* of the Madras University. The *Jāmi‘a* comprises an Arabic college providing education in Islamic sciences i.e., Quranic commentary , tradition, Islamic law grammar and syntax , logic and philosophy , rhetoric , geography, history , etc., spread over a period of eight years; an oriental college preparing students for examinations in oriental learning of the university of Madras _ the entrance to these two being open to students who have completed the government recognized seven grade course in Urdu of the elementary school , also run by the society; a department of *Tablīgh* (preaching), which aims at religious awakening among the Muslims of the religion , particularly in faraway places; a publication department which publishes pamphlets and booklets on religious topics and distributes them free on certain occasions; a department of religious decrees; and

a department of handicrafts which aims at providing vocational training like tailoring weaving and book binding. Education is completely free here.

The *Jāmi‘a* also has a library containing books in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English and the regional languages like Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, etc. It also provides facility of issue of the books by post. It has a reading room which subscribes to newspapers and periodicals and has a boarding house attached to it.²⁹

Dārul-ul-’Ulūm Ahmadiyya Salafī (Darbhanga)

The foundation of *Dārul-ul-’Ulūm Ahmadiyya Salafī* was laid down in 1332/1918 by Mawlānā ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, the great scholar of Rahimabad. But the completions of the project come to its end by the hands of Dr Sayyid Muḥammad Farīd. After his death the responsibility of the headship of the institution came on the shoulders of his son, Dr ‘Abdul Ḥafiz Salafī in 1951. ‘Abdul Ḥafiz strengthened the institution and introduced reforms, like educational scholarships and modern departments. Like *Madrasa Ahmadiyya Salafiyya* it is affiliated to Bihar State Madrasa Educational Board, Patana.

Right now the Madrasa is in possession of different departments with varied branches of knowledge. Under the institution one hundred sixty five teachers are working. The teachings in Arabic are being given of high Standards. The institution is in possession of fifteen hundred students among them four hundred are residing inside the institution.

The institution is having its own building, spread over five hectares of land. In the vicinity of the institution there is one *Jāmi‘a Masjid*. The institution is having its own Library with ten thousand books of different branches of knowledge. Besides this the Students’ Reformation Organisation (of the institution) is having its own library with a great treasure of Knowledge. Its number of books is also in thousands.

The *Dārul-’Ulūm* has been publishing a magazine titled ‘*Al-Huda*’ for last sixty years. Besides publishing different types of essays, the magazine also focuses on the national and international politics.³⁰

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CHEPTER - SEVEN

THE AHL-E-HADĪTH AND OTHER MUSLIM SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE MUSLIM SOCIETY IN INDIA

Ahl-e-Hadīth

Ahl-e-Hadīth (The people of Ḥadīth) also *Aṣḥāb al-Hadīth*; is a term that has been used to refer to many Islamic movements (both historical and modern) that emphasize the use and practice of Ahadīth in Islam.¹ It refers to the adherent's belief that they are not bound by *Taqlīd* (as are *Ahl al-Rā'i*, literally "the people of rhetorical theology"), but consider themselves free to seek guidance in matters of religious faith and practices from the authentic Ḥadīth which, together with the *Qur'ān*, are in their view the principal worthy guide for Muslims.

In the contemporary Muslim world, it refers to a reformist movement. The term *Ahl-e-Hadīth* is often used interchangeably with the term *Wahhābī* (*Muwahhidūn or Unitarians*), or as a branch of the latter movement, though the movement itself claims to be distinct from Wahhabism.² The movement has the most adherents in the Indian subcontinent, where it possesses some notable distinctions from the *Salafī/Wahhābī* movement, most of whose adherents are found in the Arab world and Indonesia. In the modern era, the movement draws inspiration from Saudi Arabia.

Their main doctrines are enumerated below:

- Strongly opposed the position of *Taqlīd-i-Shakhshī* (imitation of an *Imām/Jurist*).
- Muhsinul Mulk said: 'if we do not cleanse our religion of this *sin* (*Taqlīd*), it is unjust for us to criticize those of other religions'.
- Criticise vehemently *Urs*, *Qawwālī* and Saint Worship.
- Against *B-e Shar'a* (un Islamic Sufi Practices).
- Opposed elaborate ceremonies and adopted simple marriage and modest dowry
- Styles of prayer as stated in the *Aḥādīth* and Sunnah: say *Āmīn* loudly, lift hands before bowing (*Raf-ul Yadayn*).

- ‘Ulamā’-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth allowed to offer prayers even the Imām is known to be a *Fāsik* if the *Jamā‘at* (congregation for prayer) is ready.
- ‘Ulamā’-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth accepted all the four *Imāms* and *Imāms* of the Ahl al-Bayt in the light of the Qur’ān and Sunnah.
- ‘Ulamā’-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth firmly believed in *Ijtihād*.

Ahl-e-Hadīth in the Early Muslim History

Early proponents ascribe the authority of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* to the specific Ahādīth of Muḥammad al-Bukhārī. Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī mentioned the people of ḥadīth in his commentary of the ḥadīth, "And this notion will continue, established upon Allah's Command, unharmed by those who oppose them until the arrival of Allah's Order." He stated that Muḥammad al-Bukhārī was adamant that those referred to in this ḥadīth were the people with knowledge of the narrations, *Ahl al-Āthār*, i.e. the people of ḥadīth, and then quoted Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal as saying, "If they are not *Ahl-e-Hadīth*, then I do not know who they are." Qāḍī ‘Ayyād explained that Ahmad was referring to *Ahl al-Sunnah* and those who share the beliefs of the people of ḥadīth (Essentially, according to *Fath al-Bārī*, it is the opinion of Imām Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal that the faithful Ahl al-Sunnah and *Ahl-e-Hadīth* are not separate). The followers of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* movement claim their beliefs and practices to be the same as those of early Muslims and, in particular, the *Khulafā-i Rashidūn* (rightly guided caliphs). The movement rose to prominence in the 9th century C.E. during the Abbasid era to counter the beliefs of Mutazilites.

What really distinguishes *Ahl-e-Hadīth* (of the contemporary era) from the rest of the Sunni community is their rejection of the doctrine of *Taqlīd* (blind imitation), i.e., the doctrine that one must follow either of the four established, orthodox schools of law – Ḥanafī, Shāfi‘ī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī. Most Sunnis, in matters of religious rituals, personal law, and other issues related to *Sharī‘ah*, identify themselves as followers of one of the four classical jurists, Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Imām Shāfi‘ī, Imām Mālik, and Imām Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal. The *Ahl-e-Hadīth* insist that the latter generations of Muslims are not religiously bound to follow the legal injunctions formulated by these eminent jurists because they were based on *Qiyās* (analogical reasoning) and *Rā‘i* (personal opinions). While the entire structure of *Usūl-ul-Fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence) of the majority of the Sunni community is based on four

distinct sources of law or Sharī‘ah – *Qur’ān*, *Hadīth*, *Qiyās*, and *Ijmā* (consensus) –, the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* rely only on the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* and regard both *Qiyās* and *Ijmā* as *Bid‘ah* (innovation) in religion, if contrary with *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth*.

Ahl-e-Hadīth believe that most religious and legal matters have been clearly stated and resolved in the two primary scriptures – the *Qur’ān* and the corpus of Ahadīth – and if there are issues on which there is no direct or clear guidance in these two sources, Muslims should exercise *Ijtihād* (independent judgment, but within the general guidelines of the *Qur’ān* and the Ahadīth). Since the classical jurists and the founders of the four orthodox schools of law were not infallible (*Ma’sūm*), therefore, people are not obligated to follow their opinions and legal judgments. It is not that the followers of other schools of thought do not follow Ahadīth; the difference between *Ahl-e-Hadīth* and other schools (*Madhāhib*) is that while others, by conviction, accept a given interpretation of the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* as authoritative, *Ahl-e-Hadīth* regard these interpretations as based on “*opinions*” and thus not a religious binding.

Another important feature of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* is their reinvigorated emphasis on Tawhīd (the Unity of Allah) and their opposition to the popular practices of visiting the shrines of saints, worshipping them, or invoking their names in supplication, which they regard as a form of, *Shirk*. They are also opposed to all kinds of Sufi doctrines which are contradictory with the *Qur’ān* and Ahadīth. Their emphasis on such doctrines led many of their detractors to characterize the *Ahl-e-Hadīth ‘Ulamā’* in mid- and late-nineteenth century India as *Wahhabis*, based on the puritanical ideas of the eighteenth century Muslim reformer Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb.³

On the face of it, the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* position on matters of Sharī‘ah thus seems more progressive since it frees Muslims from the rigid *Taqlīd* or the following of legal opinions formulated by the jurists hundreds of years ago. It would also appear that by rejecting the *Ijtihād* of the classical jurists as final authority in matters of Sharī‘ah, the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* position would encourage believers to follow their own interpretations of the *Qur’ān* and the prophetic traditions, provided they are sufficiently knowledgeable about the scriptures. Similarly, by rejecting the notion of *Ijmā* (established practice of the community based on general agreement), *Ahl-e-Hadīth* would be inclined to the view that the learned scholars of every succeeding generation

of Muslims should form their own Interpretation of the *Qur'ān* and Ahadīth, and not rely on the *Taqlīd* or blind imitation of the interpretations of their predecessors.⁴

However, because of their rejection of the very principles of the use of analogical reasoning and independent judgment, and, also in their practical application, the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* position on *Shari'ah* has resulted in the most literalist and exclusivist readings of the *Qur'ān*, and especially of the Hadīth texts. As a matter of fact, Ahadīth text is literally and directly taken as a source of law without any regard to the context in which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did or said something. In their view, even a weak or suspect (*Da'īf*) Hadīth is to be preferred to the opinions of the classical jurists.

On the basis of this doctrinal position, *Ahl-e-Hadīth* distinguish themselves from the four established schools of jurisprudence on several matters of the practice of religious rituals, personal law, and some matters of *Shari'ah* that have become the hallmark of their sectarian identity, known as “[t]he distinctive practices of Ahl-e-Hadīth” (*Ahl-e-Hadīth Ke Imtiyāzī Masā'il*), these may seem ridiculously trivial to outsiders but are taken quite seriously by their practitioners. For example: for *Ahl-e-Hadīth* the recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātiha* (chapter first of the *Qur'ān*) is obligatory even when the Imām in a congregational prayer is reciting, while the Ḥanafīs believe that the recitation by the Imām is enough on behalf of the entire congregation. *Ahl-e-Hadīth* perform *Raf'ul Yadayn* (raise their hands during the *Takbīr*) in the ritual prayer, while the Ḥanafīs do not. *Ahl-e-Hadīth* fold their hands on the chest during the standing posture of the ritual prayer, while the Ḥanafīs fold their hands under the navel. *Ahl-e-Hadīth* say “*Āmīn*” loudly after the Imām recites *Sūrah al-Fātiha*, while the Ḥanafīs say it softly. Other differences, similarly, relate to the “correct postures” during the ritual prayer and to the number of voluntary units of prayer during Ramadan. There are also differences on what would require refreshing the ritual *Ablution* (*Waqūdī*) before one offers ritual prayers. *Ahl-e-Hadīth*, for example, believe that touching of genitals and woman would require refreshing the *Waqūdī* while the Ḥanafīs do not.

Howsoever trivial these differences may seem, they have engaged Muslim jurists, like their counterparts in rabbinical tradition of legal hair-splitting, for centuries and have created sectarian strife, especially in Muslim South Asia. What emphatically defines the theocratic particularism of *Ahl-e-Hadīth* in the Indian

Subcontinent, however, is not the specificity of their ritual practices, but their uncompromising position on *Tawhīd* and their outright rejection of the doctrine of *Taqlīd*.

It is also important to note that most of these *Ahl-e-Hadīth* practices developed in polemics against the Ḥanafīs, rather than the other three schools of Islamic law. *Ahl-e-Hadīth* have launched incessant sectarian battles against Ḥanafīs on issues such as the proper performance of religious rituals and on matters pertaining to marriage, divorce, and custody. Compared to the other schools of law, however, *Ahl-e-Hadīth* have much in common with the Ḥanbalī school since one of the most important of their theological mentors, Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb, the 18th century Arabian religious reformer, was also a Ḥanbalī scholar.⁵

Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’ Lucknow follows Ḥanafī School but they are liberal and having broad outlook and accepted Shāfi‘ī, Mālikī, Ḥanbalī schools in the light of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. They also accept many doctrines of other Imāms. Banāras Salafiyya followed Ḥanbalī School of thought and emphasized only on the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* or Sunnah of Prophet Muḥammad (*peace be upon him*), nowadays many *Ahl-e-Hadīth* in India, however, practice *Bid‘ah* due to the cultural assimilation of other communities.⁶

Besides Ḥanafī School, Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī and Ḥanbalī Schools, there had been many other schools also in the golden period of learning. These four Schools are known as Sunni Schools. The Sunnis are so called from their reception of the “*Sunnah*” or traditions as having authority concurrent with the Supplementary to the *Qur’ān*. The principles of these four schools are substantially the same, and they differ from each other only in the matters of detail. Shia and Sunni division is not a religious issue rather it is a political issue .the Shia School. This division rose only due to political issue of Caliphate. Therefore, the differences between Shia and Sunni are mainly based upon question relating to political events of past, rather than to any general principles of law or jurisprudence.⁷

The Concept of *Ummah* (Community)

The Concept of *Ummah* (community) is central to Islamic beliefs but except during the life of Prophet Muḥammad (*peace be upon him*), the existence of one single *Ummah* has been just an illusion. Just before the demise of Prophet Muḥammad

(peace be upon him), there was a major schism in Islam that led to the formation of two groups, Sunnis and Shias. These major groups kept dividing and sub-dividing into other formations where as new sects kept originating. Some have survived history, some have shaped it and some have faded into oblivion. There is a famous tradition related to Prophet (peace be upon him) that there will be 73 sects of Muslims with only one being safe from the fire. Many sects use this Ḥadīth (tradition) to highlight differences with other sects and insist the contention that their sect is the only rightly guided one.

Imām Abū Ḥanīfa (150 A.H./767C.E.) and The Ḥanafī Madhhab/Maslak (path)

Abū Ḥanīfa as-Nu‘mān Ibn Thābit, commonly known as Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, the founder of the most important of the Sunni Schools of jurisprudence, was born in the year 80 A.H. at Kufa. Abū Ḥanīfa was a pious and honest man, with independent character. He never accepted any post in the Government and became victim of Umayyad rulers as well as Abbasids. In the year 132 A.H. he constituted a committee of 40 members for the codification of Islamic law and this committee took 22 years to complete its work. The collection, thus, compiled was known as *Kutūb Abū Ḥanīfa*, is however, not available in the current times.⁸

Abū Ḥanīfa met the blessed Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and is counted amongst the *Tābi’ūn* (followers of the Companions/Ṣahābah). He is renowned for his piercing intellect as *Faqīh*, his scrupulousness and integrity of character and his resoluteness in the face of oppression. His School is historically associated with the rule in India and is the most widely followed School of jurisprudence. This makes his study particularly important for the English speaking readers since it gives them an in-depth appreciation of the School followed by the majority of the Muslims in the world.

Abū Ḥanīfa, lived in what is now modern-day Iraq, not long after the Prophet Muhammad’s (peace be upon him) death. It is reported that he studied under many teachers of high erudition. He is reported to have met the “*Companion*” (Ṣahābī) Anas Ibn Mālik, making him one of the *Tābi’ūn*, or second generation in oral transmission from the beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Ḥanafī Doctrines

The Ḥanafī School is the first of the four orthodox Sunni Schools of Jurisprudence. It is distinguished from the other Schools through its placing of less reliance on the mass oral traditions as a source of legal knowledge. The exegesis of the Qur’ān, in it, is developed through a method of analogical reasoning known as Qiyās. It also established the principle that the universal concurrence of the *Ummah* (Community) of Islam on a point of law, as represented by legal and religious Scholars, constituted evidence of the will of God. This process is called *Ijmā*, which means the consensus of the Scholars of a particular age or period of time. Thus, the School definitively established the Qur’ān, the Traditions of the Prophet, *Ijmā* and Qiyās as the basis of Islamic law. In addition to these, Hanafis accepted local /popular customs ('Uruf) as a Secondary Source of the law. The privileged position which the School enjoyed under the Abbasid Caliphate was lost with the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate. However, the rise of the Ottoman ('Uthmānī) Empire led to the revival of Hanafī fortunes. Under the Ottomans the judgement-seats were occupied by Ḥanafīs sent from Istanbul, even in countries where the population followed another *Madhab/Juristic School*. Consequently, the Ḥanafī School became the only authoritative code of law in the public life and official administration of justice in all the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Even today the Ḥanafī code prevails in the former Ottoman countries. It is also dominant in Central Asia and India.

To get a better understanding of Ḥanafī School of Jurisprudence, it is worthwhile to examine the methods used by its founder, Imām Abū Ḥanīfa in formulating legal principles. Abu Ḥanīfa based his doctrines on the Qur’ān and Ahadīth . According to him, the Qur’ān is eternal in its original essence. It is the word of Allah, and is His inspired word and revelation. It is a necessary *attribute* (*Sifat*) of Allah. It is not Allah, but still it is inseparable from Allah. But Allah’s word is ‘uncreated’ (*Ghayr -al Makhlūq*).

The Qur’ān, he regarded, as indeed the first and primary Source of deducing the form of rituals bearing on civil and criminal laws. For the Hadīth, which being narrated by different persons in varying manner and therefore, varying grades of credence needed to be attached to what they narrate, he was very strict in relying upon or accepting. It is said that he was very cautious in relating the traditions of the Prophet (peace and blessing is be upon him) for forgery had become common in those days. Ibn Khaldūn writes that the Imām Abū Ḥanīfa narrated only seventeen traditions

and preferred Qiyās or Analogy, which means the analogical deductions from passages occurring in the Qur’ān, tested by his own opinion. In fact, in his time jurists were divided into two groups; Those of Hijāz, who were called ‘the upholders of the traditions (*Ahl-e-Hadīth*) and those of Iraq who were known as ‘upholders of private opinion (*Ahl al-Rā'y*).⁹

Imām Abū Ḥanīfa gave Prominence to Qiyās (Analogical Deduction)

Imām Abū Ḥanīfa was the first jurist to give prominence to the doctrine of Qiyās or analogical deduction and set up regular machinery to deduce principles by way of Qiyās or analogical deduction. Qiyās is a systematic opinion and should be based on either Qur’ān or tradition or Ijmā. With regard to deduction of an order from a verse of the Qur’ān, Abū Ḥanīfa adopted the following methods:-

- 1) As per contents of a verse i.e., (*Sarāḥat-al Naṣṣ*).
- 2) As per reasons of a verse i.e., (*Dalālat-al Naṣṣ*).
- 3) A per indication of a verse i.e., (*Ishārat-al Naṣṣ*).
- 4) According to purpose of a verse i.e., (*Ghāyat-al Naṣṣ*).

He based his reasoning on Qur’ān and Hadīth. He said “we cannot compel others to accept our *Rā'y* and Qiyās, if they do not like our *Rā'y* they can accept the opinion of others”. Thus in deciding the cases he sought answer first from the tenets of the Qur’ān, then the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) were searched. If an answer to any proposition was not found in the Qur’ān and traditions then the matter was solved by Qiyās.¹⁰

Imām Abū Ḥanīfa and Ijmā (Consensus of Opinion)

Imām Abū Ḥanīfa also accepted the doctrine of Ijmā or consensus of opinion. His view regarding the Ijmā is more comprehensive and broad than any of his contemporary jurists. Some were of the opinion that the validity of Ijmā, as a Source of law should be confined to the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and others would extend it to their successors, but no further. Abū Ḥanīfa affirmed its validity in every age.¹¹

Imām Mālik (179A.H.) and the Mālikī Madhhab

He was born in 93 A.H. in the period of the Umayyad Dynasty. His full name is Mālik bin Anas. He is the founder of the Mālikī School of Jurisprudence. He lived

his whole life in Madinah where much of the Qur'ān was revealed and most of the legal practices of Islam established. He spent his life studying, recording and clarifying the legal parameters and precedents which were passed down to him by the first two generations of Muslims who were the direct inheritors of the perfected form of Islam left by the beloved Prophet (peace be upon him). Imām Mālik was born shortly thereafter in Madinah. There are reports that he lived in the time of Abū Ḥanīfa and, although Mālik was much younger, their mutual respect is well-known. In fact, one of Abū Ḥanīfa's main students, on whose teachings a lot of the Ḥanafī School is based, studied under Imām Mālik as well. Imām Mālik learnt Ḥadīth from his uncle, Sayyidunā Abū Suhayl Nāfi. The Imām was a very keen scholar from his childhood. Imām Mālik's fame spread far and wide and many great scholars sat in his company learning Ḥadīth and other Islamic legal issues. Some 1300 Scholars learned at his feet. They copied the "Muwatta" from him. The "Muwatta" is a collection of Ḥadīth by Imām Mālik. Many of his pupils copied the *Muwatta*, the famous among them being: Sayyidunā Yaḥyā bin Yaḥyā al Masmūdī, Sayyidunā Ibn Wahāb Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullah and Sayyidunā Abī 'Abdullah 'Abdur Raḥmān.

Mālikī Doctrines

Mālikī is the Second of the Islamic Schools of Jurisprudence. The Sources of Mālikī doctrines are the Qur'ān, the Prophet's Traditions (Ḥadīth), Consensus (Ijmā), and Analogy (Qiyās). Imām Mālik was a great jurist as well as (Muḥaddith) traditionist. His doctrines were not, essentially different from those of Abū Ḥanīfa. His first source was, essentially the Qur'ān and then come the traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), among traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he preferred the traditions which were collected and narrated by the traditionists of Madinah. The last two sources of law for him were Qiyās and *Istishlah*. He did not rely much on Qiyās like Imām Abū Ḥanīfa. This was the procedure adopted by Imām Mālik in deciding the legal problems.¹²

Imām Mālik and Ijmā or Consensus of Opinion

Another conception which Mālik and his School developed into greater exactitude and force was that of the 'consensus' (Ijmā). The Mālikis recognize the validity of Ijmā of the Companions and their Successors residing at Madinah without reference to the opinion of others. Against this claim, it is urged that men, learned in

the Qur'ān, and Ḥadīth , and the law, dispersed to all parts of Arabia, some during the Prophet's (peace be upon him) lifetime, and others after his demise. They further point out that Makkah is no less sacred than Madinah. Two traditions are also relied upon in support of the Mālikī view. 'Madinah throws out its dross as fire throws the dross of metal; and Islam will stick to Madinah as a serpent to its hole'. These traditions are, however, interpreted by other jurists as being merely indicative of the sacred character of the city. It was the opinion of Mālikī that Ijmā is confined to the men of Madinah. But this is not the accepted Mālikī doctrine.

Ijmā is completed as soon as the jurists of the age in which the question arises have come to an agreement thereon, after they have had sufficient time to mature their deliberations. Mālikis recognize the authority of Ijmā not merely in matters of law and religion but also in other matters such as organization of army, preparations for war and in other matters of administration of the state.¹³

***Istihsān* and *Istidlāl*: Mālikī' view**

Imām Mālik accepted *Istihsān* as principle of law but his conception slightly differs and thus he developed a similar doctrine *Istislah* or public good, which means a deduction of law based on considerations of public good. The word *Istidlāl* in ordinary use means the inferring of a thing from another thing. Mālikis use it as a distinct method of juristic ratiocination, not falling within the scope for interpretation or analogy. Qādī Wadūd says that the doctrine of *Istihsān* and Mālikī doctrine of public good are covered by *Istidlāl*. In Imām Mālik's view the practices of people of Madinah can be basis of *Istidlāl* but nowhere had he mentioned that the practices or usages of other places are not permissible and only the usages or practices of Madinah are permissible.

It can be concluded that Imām Mālik based his legal doctrines on the following sources

- 1) *Holy Qur'ān*
- 2) *Hadīth*
- 3) *Āthār Ahl-e-Madinah*
- 4) *Ta'mul-e Ahl-e-Madinah*
- 5) *Qiyās* (Analogical deduction)
- 6) *Istislah*

Among these Sources he learned more on traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and usages of Madinah.¹⁴

Imām Mālik's major contribution to Islamic law is his book *Al-Muwatta* (the beaten path). The *Muwatta* is a code of law based on the legal practices that were operating in Madinah. It covers various areas ranging from prescribed rituals of prayer and fasting to the correct conduct of business relations. The legal code is supported by some 2,000 traditions attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). Such was his stature that it is said three 'Abbasid Caliphs visited him while they were on pilgrimage to Madinah. The Second Abbasid Caliph, Al-Manṣūr (d.775), approached the Madinan jurist with the proposal to establish a judicial system that would unite the different judicial methods that were operating at that time throughout the Islamic world. The School spread westwards through Mālik's disciples, becoming dominant in North Africa and Spain. In North Africa Mālikiyah gave rise to an important Sufi order, Shādhiliyyah, which was founded by Abū Al-Hasan, a jurist of the Mālikī School, in Tunisia during the thirteenth century.

During the ottoman period Hanafite Turks were given the most important judicial posts in the Ottoman Empire. North Africa, however, remained faithful to its Malikite heritage. Such was the strength of the local tradition that Qādīs (judges) from both the Hanafite and Malikite traditions worked with the local ruler. Following the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Mālikiyah regained its position of ascendancy in the region. Today Mālikī doctrine and practice remains widespread throughout North Africa, the Sudan and regions of west and Central Africa.

Imām Mālik was a great "Muḥaddith" (A Scholar of Ḥadīth). He was very careful in selecting Ḥadīth, and after examining a Ḥadīth thoroughly used to record it in his *Muwatta*. As a Jurist, he was not afraid of giving a "Fatwa" (legal Islamic ruling) even if it was against the Caliph. He was once flogged for doing so. He passed away on the 11th of Rabī-ul-Awwal in the year 179 A.H. when he was 86 years old. Imām Mālik is buried in *Jannatul Baqī* in Madinah al-Munawwarah.

Imām Shāfi‘ī (150 A.H. - 204 A.H.) and the Shāfi‘ī Madhab

He was founder of the Shāfi‘ī School of Jurisprudence. His full name was Muḥammad bin Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī. Famously known as Imām al-Shāfi‘ī, he was born in 150A.H. and belonged to Quraysh tribe. He was remarkable in that he resolved the

differences of opinion that arose in the still evolving Muslim community and brought them together in the most outstanding legal system in the whole history of mankind.

When he was 10 years old, he came to Makkah al-Mukkarramah from Palestine where he grew up. He was very intelligent and had an excellent memory. He memorized the entire holy Qur'ān at the age of 7. By the age of 15, he had memorized the entire *Muwatta* of Imām Mālik. Before the age of 20, he studied Islamic Jurisprudence under the Mūfti of Makkah al-Mukkarramah, Sayyidunā Muslim bin Khalīl al-Zanjī and also from Sayyidunā Sufyān bin Uyayna. Imām Mālik bin Anas was also one of his teachers.

When the Governor of Iraq visited Madinah al-Munawwarah, he was so impressed by Imām Shāfi‘ī that he persuaded him to become an Administrator. As Imām Shāfi‘ī was in conflict with the Government officials, he was deported to Iraq and brought in front of Hārūn al-Rashīd, who was very impressed with Imām Shāfi‘ī. He now studied Islamic jurisprudence under Imām Muḥammad al-Shaybānī, who was the student of Imām A‘zam Abū Ḥanīfa. Thus, Imām Shāfi‘ī became a master of both the Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī Schools of *Fiqh*. Imām Shāfi‘ī was also taught by both Abū Ḥanīfa and Imām Mālik, and his respect for both men is also well-documented.

Shāfi‘ī Doctrines

Shāfi‘ī was the third School of Islamic jurisprudence. According to the Shāfi‘ī School the paramount sources of legal authority are the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Of less authority are the *Ijmā* and *Ijtihād* exercised through *Qiyās*. A Scholar must interpret the ambiguous passages of the Qur'ān according to the consensus of the early scholars. Originally Al- Shāfi‘ī belonged to the School of Madinah and was also a pupil of Mālik bin Anas (d.795), the founder of Mālikī School. However, he came to believe in the overriding authority of the traditions from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and identified them with the Sunnah. Baghdad and Cairo were the Chief centres of the Shāfi‘īyyah. From these two cities Shāfi‘ī teaching spread into various parts of the Islamic world. In the tenth century Makkah and Madinah came to be regarded as the School's chief centres outside Egypt. In the centuries preceding the emergence of the Ottoman Empire the Shāfi‘ī School had acquired supremacy in the central lands of Islam. It was only under the Ottoman Sultans at the beginning of the sixteenth century that the Shāfi‘īs were replaced by the Ḥanafī jurists who were given judicial authority in Constantinople, while Central Asia passed to the Shia as a result of the rise of the

Safavids in 1501. In spite of these developments, the people in Egypt, Syria and the Hijāz continued to follow the Shāfi‘ī *Madhab*.

Imām Shāfi‘ī based his doctrines on the Qur’ān. He says “Qur’ān is the basis of legal Knowledge”. The Qur’ān serves the double purpose of supplying raw material for legislation, as the basic Source of law, and an inspiring ideal for the scholars who aimed at shaping the system of law in harmony with that model. *Risāla-i Imām Shāfi‘ī* had given 220 Quranic citations either as specific rules of law or as examples for formulating principles of law.¹⁵

Imām Shāfi‘ī and Doctrine of Ijmā

Imām Shāfi‘ī was a strong supporter of the doctrine of Ijmā. By Ijmā (Consensus) Shāfi‘ī does not mean merely the agreement of a few Scholars of a certain town or locality but the Consensus of the majority of leading jurists in Muslim lands.

According to the accepted Shāfi‘ī doctrine, a man disputing the authority of Ijmā does not become guilty of infidelity, except when the decision is in respect of matters, which are established by clear authority and universally accepted, such as the obligation to observe the daily Prayers, to fast during Ramadan, to pay Zakāt and to perform Pilgrimage (Hajj), the unlawfulness, of drinking intoxicating liquor, of dealing in usury and the lawfulness of marriage, sale, lease and the like.

Shāfi‘ī accepted the authority of Ijmā not only in religion but also in temporal matters such as organisation of the army, preparations for war and other questions of administration of the state.¹⁶

Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal and the Ḥanbalī School

Imām Abu Abdullah Aḥmad bin Muḥammad bin Ḥanbal, born in Marw on the 20th of Rabī-ul-Awwal 164 A.H., was chronologically the last of the four Imāms/Jurists and lived just after the first three generations of exemplary Muslims, thus confronting a slightly different situation from that faced by his three predecessors. This necessitated a fresh approach to the legal issues arising out of the situation of the rapidly expanding urban development and imperial government which started to engulf much of the Muslim community. His father, Sayyidunā Muḥammad was a warrior (*Mujāhid*) and lived in Basra, Iraq. Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal was a very intelligent child, keenly interested in furthering his Islamic education. At the age of

16, he began studying Ḥadīth literature. It is said that he learnt almost a million Ḥadīth by heart. He became a famous jurist. Some of his teachers were Imām Shāfi‘ī, Bishar bin al-Mufaddal, Ismā‘īl bin Ulayyah, Jarīr bin ‘Abdul Ḥamīd and Yaḥyā bin Sa‘īd. He was imprisoned for his stern position against the Mu‘tazilah views and on the 25th of Ramadan in the year 221 A.H., Caliph Mu‘tasim, in fear of the sin he committed, repented and set the Imām free. He passed away in the year 241 A.H.

The Doctrines of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal

The Ḥanbalī School is the fourth orthodox School of law within Sunni Islam. It derives its decrees from the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, which it places above all forms of consensus, opinion or inferences. The Ḥanbalī School of law was established by Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal. He studied law under different masters, including Imām Shāfi‘ī. He is regarded as more learned in the traditions than in jurisprudence. His status also derives from his collection and exposition of the Ḥadīth. His major contribution to Islamic Scholarship is a collection of fifty thousand traditions known as ‘*Musannad Imām Ḥanbal*’. The School accepts as authoritative an opinion given by a Companion of the Prophet (peace be upon him), provided there is no disagreement with another Companion. In case of any disagreement, the opinion of the Companion nearest to that of the Qur’ān or the Sunnah will prevail.

In spite of the importance of Ḥanbal’s work his School did not enjoy the popularity of the three preceding Sunni School of law. Ḥanbal’s followers were regarded as reactionary and troublesome on account of their reluctance to give personal opinion on matters of law, their rejection of analogy, their fanatic intolerance of views other than their own, and their exclusion of opponents from power and judicial office. Their unpopularity led to periodic bouts of persecution against them. The later history of the School has been characterised by fluctuations in their fortunes. Ḥanbalī Scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328) and Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyya (d.1350), did display more tolerance to others’ views than their predecessors and were instrumental in making the teachings of Ḥanbalī more generally accessible. From time to time Ḥanbaliyyah became an active and numerically strong School in certain areas under the jurisdiction of the Abbasid Caliphate. But its importance gradually declined under the Ottoman Turks. The emergence of the *Wahhabī* in the nineteenth century and its challenge to Ottoman authority enabled Ḥanbaliyyah to enjoy a period of revival.

Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal and Ijmā or Consensus of Opinion

Ijmā or Consensus of opinion (which is defined as agreement of jurists among the followers of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) in a particular age on a question of law) has been accepted by Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal as Source of law but he made little use of this doctrine due to dependence on Ḥadīth. According to one reported version of Ḥanbal's opinion, Ijmā is confined to the Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him); it is in contrast to the opinion of Imām Abu Ḥanīfa and Imām Shāfi‘ī who did not confine Ijmā to any age or any place.

Regarding the completion of Ijmā, Ḥanbal's and Shāfi‘ī's opinion was that, it is necessary to wait until the age in which the jurists who were parties to the Ijmā have come to an end, or, in other words, until all of them have died without any one having withdrawn his assent or changed his opinion. According to another report of Ḥanbal's opinion he was in favour of such suspension of Ijmā only in matters of analogical deduction, but not when it was found on texts of the Qur’ān or Ḥadīth. In Ḥanbal's view, Ijmā may be based on Qur’ān, Ḥadīth or analogy, this is also the opinion of other Sunni Schools.¹⁷

Development of the Shia School

When Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) was alive he was the head of the Islamic State as well as the final interpreter of law and religion. After his demise in (632 C.E.) there arose a difference of opinion among Muslims on the question of his succession. One party under Haḍrat Abu Bakr (R.A.), Haḍrat ‘Umar (R.A.) and others insisted that Caliph must be elected by the unanimous opinion of the Muslims. The other party claimed Haḍrat ‘Alī (R.A.) to be the rightful successor of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) and in support of their claim they submitted the tradition that when Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) was returning from his fare well Pilgrimage, he stopped at a place known as Ghadīr Khum, and there he announced to those who were with him that it was his desire that ‘Alī should be his Successor.¹⁸

After a great discussion and struggle between various groups of Muslims, finally Haḍrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) was elected by majority of Muslims and was declared as first Caliph of Islam and Haḍrat ‘Alī (R.A.) himself after few days paid homage to

him. Haḍrat ‘Alī (R.A.) remained as prominent figure in temporal as well as religious affairs of the Islamic State during the three Orthodox Caliphs, Haḍrat Abu Bakr (R.A.), Haḍrat ‘Umar (R.A.) and Haḍrat ‘Uthmān (R.A.). He was adviser to all the aforesaid Caliphs and due to his usual virtue and wisdom he was revered by all.

After the assassination of Haḍrat ‘Uthmān (R.A.), the third orthodox Caliph, Haḍrat ‘Alī (R.A.) was made the Caliph of Islam. He was murdered by a Khwārijī. Khwārijīs were those who did not admit the Succession of Haḍrat ‘Uthmān (R.A.). and Haḍrat ‘Alī (R.A.) as Caliph and found fault with them. Thus, at the end of the period of the orthodox Caliphs Islamic Society was distinctively divided into three groups; Sunni, Shiite and Khwārijī. Imām Ḥasan (R.A.) succeeded Haḍrat ‘Alī (R.A.) and after him Umayyads became the rulers of Islamic world. It was in the period of Yazīd, the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusayn (R.A.), the grandson of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) happened which finally resulted in the division of Society into Sunni and Shiite. In the succeeding period Shiites developed a large number of sub Schools, prominent among are:

- 1) *Zaidīs*
- 2) *Ithnā Asharīs or the twelvers*
- 3) *Isma‘ilīs or Seveners*¹⁹

Doctrines of the Shiite School

Shias accept the authority of the Qur’ān, the word of Allah, and the Sunna of the Prophet (peace be upon him). No ḥadīth is ordinarily accepted by them unless related or transmitted by an *Ahl-e-Bayt* Imām or descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). Ahadīth transmitted through the Companions are also acceptable to them. If they deal with the words and actions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and do not contradict the ḥadīth of household of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him).

These *Akhbār*/traditions which they consider as the only ones authorized differ from the ḥadīth (traditions) because the *Isnād* (chains of transmitters of the traditions) admits only the testimony of the *Ahl-e Bayt* and their partisans as already mentioned above. Therefore in Shiite School traditions are an integral Source of law as in Sunni jurisprudence. But difference is that they accept traditions related or narrated by an Imām descended from the Prophet (peace be upon him). The sole object seems to

support the privilege of the Imām, the Shia dogma of Imām Mahdī and the exclusive claims of the descendants of Ḥadrat ‘Alī to the Caliphate.²⁰

The doctrine of Qiyās or Ijmā is not accepted by the Shia as understood among the Sunnis. They allow Ijtihād and hold that only the descendants of Ḥadrat ‘Alī and in his absence the *Mujtahid* (one who exercises Ijtihād), his servants and teachers of the true faith, can interpret law correctly. The Imām is the law-giver himself, the speaking Qur’ān; he may in a proper case even legislate, make new laws and abrogate old ones; but as he is hidden, the *Mujtahid*, who are present at all times and in each country, are his agents, the recognized interpreters of the law in accordance with the canonical traditions. Ijtihād has therefore taken a different turn and got entirely different meaning in Shiīte law.

Thus, it can be concluded that law in Shiīte School consists of rules for human conduct, based on the authoritative interpretation of the Qur’ān and the Sunna and the decisions of Imāms, by the *Mujtahid*, who are the servants of the Imām of the time, derive their authority from him and act in his name.²¹

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Conclusion

Islam is the final form of all previous revealed faiths. Islam enjoins: belief in one Allah, the Angels, the Books of Allah, and all the Prophets and in the day of resurrection. Islam does not profess to be a new religion as instructed by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but a continuation of the religious principles established by other Prophets of Allah. It is an inclusive religion which contains within itself all previous faiths which went before it. Islam is also a living and potent force in the modern times. The Qur'an is the fundamental or basic source of Islamic jurisprudence. Next in the importance and authority comes the *Sunnah* (way) or *Aḥādīth* (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). *Hadīth* itself derives its authority and legal validity from the Qur'an. *Hadīth* here refers to the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). *Sunnah* literally means a way or rule or manner of acting or mode of life. In its Islamic legal terminology, *Sunnah* indicates the doings, deeds and tacit approval of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). The Qur'an generally deals with the broad principles or essentials of religion, going into detail in very rare cases. The details were generally supplied by the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) himself through the *Aḥādīth*.

The four orthodox Caliphs took great pains to see that only the correct tradition is narrated. The narrator was asked to swear that he was speaking the truth. Among the judges and traditionists of this period where the four Caliphs i.e., Hadrat Abū Bakr (R.A.), Hadrat ‘Umar (R.A.), Hadrat ‘Uthmān (R.A.) and Hadrat ‘Alī (R.A.) and various other prominent Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) like Hadrat ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās, Hadrat ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar (R.A.), Hadrat Zayd Bin Thābit (R.A.), Hadrat ‘Abdullah Ibn Abū Bakr (R.A.) etc. The *Aḥādīth* in this sense of the reports of the sayings and doings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been subjected to keen pursuit and constant study by the Muslims since the very beginning of the history of Islam up to present times. Some of them wrote down what he said in *Šuhuf* (sing., *Šāhīfah*) which were later on read by them to their students and which were preserved in their families and also by their followers (*Tābiūn*). After the demise of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), some of his Companions as well as their followers undertook long arduous journeys, courted poverty and penury in order to collect the *Aḥādīth* together. Imām Mālik's

great work *Kitab-al-Muwatta* (beaten path) is an example of such an arduous task. It is the oldest corpus of the *Sunnah* that has survived from the early periods. The *Muwatta* was not intended to serve as a collection of *Hadīth* but it may be said with equal justice that it is not a book of *Fiqh* either. The books compiled latter on in this direction are known as *Al-Sihāh al- Sittah* or the “Six *Sahīhs*”. The Collections of Imām Al-Bukhārī and Imām Muslim rank high and are known as “*Al-Sahīhayn*” i.e. authentic and authoritative. The best known collection on the ‘*Musnad*’ pattern is the Collection of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal (d. 855 C.E). The six collections of *Aḥadīth* are recognised by Ahl- al-Sunnah as the *Sihāh-e Sittah* or the six reliable collections. These are the collections by Muḥammad Ibn Ismail Bukhārī, Imām Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Imām Tirmizī, Ibn Mājah and Imām Nasā’ī. Among *Sihāh al- Sittah*, the *Sahīh* of Bukhārī, holds the first place in several respects.

The earliest compilation of such recorded traditions, supported in each instance by a chain of authorities tracing it back to the beloved Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), was the first biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) by Ibn Ishāq. This was followed Imām Mālik’s famous hand book, *Muwatta* based on the same Principle on *Sanad* (chain of narrators) and *Matn* (subject-matter). Thereafter followed by Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal’s work, *Musnad*.

“The Ahadith have elaborated and fixed the academic and practical meaning of the Quranic ayat [Āyāt/verses] from every angle. The Ahadith have explained the principles relating to all branches of human life in such a miraculous manner that no room has been left for any fraud to resort to his fraudulent methods. The Ahadith of Prophet (peace be upon him) have provided the Ummat [Ummah] with guidance in detail for every aspect of life which will arise until the day of Qiyamah [Qiyāmah] be it faith or practice, free will or fatalism, obedience to government or speaking up against oppression and injustice. Thus, noble Qur’ān has designated this Ummat [Ummah] as the “*Ummat Wast*” or “*balanced nation*”.

Imām Mālik had based his Fiqh on the traditions or *Aḥādīth* whether it may be *Musnad* or *Mursil*, Abu Bakr Abhari stated that in *Muwatta* the total number of Mulasil (connected) Ahadith are 1720 and among them 600 *Muwqoof* and 275 are the *qual* of Tabayeen (Sayings of Tabayeen).

Istihsān which means the law of preference or suitableness of an act or juristic equity was accepted by Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal as source of law. He says that *Istihsān* is to abandon a rule or command to adopt another better rule.

Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal's method of formulating legal doctrines was of *Ashāb-e-Hadīth*, therefore very few books on principles of *Fiqh* in Ḥanbalī legal literature can be traced, whereas there are numerous works on *Hadīth*. Among Ibn Ḥanbal's works, the great collection of traditions known as “*Musnad Ahmad*” was actually compiled by his son ‘Abdullah from his lectures and was amplified by supplements (*Zawā'id*). It consists of 28,000 – 29,000 traditions. Apart from the *Musnad*, Ibn Ḥanbal's *Kitāb al-Salāt wa mā Yalzam Fīha*, on the discipline at prayer—written in prison, is frequently quoted in works of Hanbalite dogmatists; *Al-Radd ‘Ala ’l-Zanādiqa Wal-Jahmiyya Fī Mā Shakkat fīhi Min Mutashabih al-Qur’ān*, in which he refutes the *Tāwil*—explanation introduced by the Mutazilites to the Qur’ān. Likewise a book entitled *Kitāb Tā‘at al-Rasūl* is quoted, in which he discusses the line one must follow in those cases where the *Aḥādīth* seems to be in contradiction with the text of certain Quranic passages.

The *Ashāb-e-Hadīth* (people of the traditions) appear to have developed out of a pious reaction to the assassination of Caliph Yazīd bin Walīd (d.744). Prior to Yazīd's assassination, scholars who emphasized *Hadīth* (traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad) as the primary source for interpreting the will of Allah were disorganized and fairly removed from the widespread emphasis on applying varying levels of reason to the Qur’ān. Yazīd's assassination was interpreted by more conservative groups as a revolution against the predestined plan of Allah. After the Abbasid revolution (c.720-750), the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* or *Ashāb-e-Hadīth* (*Salafī*) developed into the main group opposed to the dominance of the rationalist theology of the *Mu’tazilah*. During the religious inquisition or *Mihna* (833-850) many of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* or *Ashāb-e-Hadīth* were imprisoned for refusing to agree to the doctrine of the created Qur’ān. Members of the *Ahl* or *Ashāb-e-Hadīth*, such as Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal(d.855), became important religious and social leader due to the refusal to recant their beliefs in the eternal nature of the Qur’ān. After the *Mihna*, the *Ashāb-e-Hadīth* led an anti-rationalist movement that forced advocates of rationalist thought underground. The *Ashāb-e-Hadīth* formed a school of legal thought named

after Ahmād Ibn Ḥanbāl that continued to pursue legal methods that focused less on uses of reason and more on tradition. The contemporary influence of *Ashāb-e-Hadīth* ideology continues to be important for a number of diverse groups like the contemporary *Ahl-e-Hadīth* or *Salafis* or *Wahābis*.

The *Ahl-e-Hadīth*, literally the ‘‘*people of tradition*’’, is not a distinct group of thinkers, but refers variously to the Ḥanbalī jurists, and or to those who see themselves as particularly enthusiastic about the Prophetic traditions (*Hadīth* reports) in Islam. Ḥanbalī *Fuqahā* (jurists of Islamic law) are expected to master the *Hadīth* Collections, to be experts in judging their varying levels of reliability and in using them to resolve legal issues. The different legal schools in Islam take different attitudes toward the *Hadīth* reports. The Ḥanbalī School does embody a particularly enthusiastic commitment to the *Aḥādīth* in its definition and justification of legal validity. It sees other schools as not being appropriately committed to them and as excessively privileging the *Rā'y* (personal opinion) of jurists. Those who emphasize the significance of traditions set themselves up as the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* against the *Ahl-al-Ra'y* (people of opinion).

In the ninth century (3rd century A.H.) the Abbasid leader in Baghdad directly attacked the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* for their theory that the Qur’ān was uncreated. The Caliph al-Mamūn insisted that the community support the view that the Qur’ān was created, a view that was propounded by the Mu’tazilah. This view was later on reversed and the *Ashāb* or *Ahl-e-Hadīth* (*Salafi*) became the new orthodoxy, a condition in which they persisted for many centuries in the Sunni world. Ibn –Nadīm in his *Al-Fihrist* used the expression *Ahl-e-Hadīth* to replace the more common *Ahl-al-Sunnah*, perhaps as a result of his Shiī sympathies on the other hand, those with in the Islamic world who argue for a new approach to longstanding issues criticized the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* as a group of reactionary thinkers, and as people often aligned with radical and violent groups.

Islam quickly spread in many parts of the world and the Islamic empire included in its orbit men of various tribes and nationalities. It spread in Western Central Asia, Africa, Spain, India and other parts of the world; it is sometimes supposed that the spread of Islam in India was due to force employed by the conquerors. This view is not correct for there are no instances in history of whole sale persecutions of non-Muslims. A study of Islam in India in the eighteenth century is inextricably entwined with two strands, both of which were of primary importance.

Great controversies, ideological and sectarian, whether over pantheism or Imamate, that shook other parts of the Islamic world, in due course, extended to India. On the other hand the entire question of co-existence of Islam with Hinduism presented a unique feature hardly paralleled in any other part of the world. Islam in India was particularly affected by successive waves of ideas and practices of Sufi thought from the Islamic world. The early Sufi Saints who came to India and permanently settled here had lived with the common people and propagated the laws of Islam and tied it had flourished invite them to embrace Islam. It is largely due to their missionary zeal that Islam in the early centuries in India had flourished.

It is true to say that since 13th century C.E. Sufis started organizing themselves into various orders like Chishtiyah, Suhrawrdiyah, Qādiriyah and Naqshbandiyah etc. Ahl-e-Hadith Movement is an extension for Islamic revivalism and the main Slogan is back to the Qur'ān and Sunnah of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him). In the India *Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyyah* movement was founded by Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā‘īl Shahīd as a religious reform movement during C.E. 1818, it took a political turn within a few years and spread throughout Indo-Pakistan subcontinent with extraordinary rapidity. In course of time, it also split up into three distinct groups, namely the *Patna school*, *Ta’ayuni* and the *Ahl-e-Hadith*.''

Muinuddīn Aḥmad (the author of *Faraizi Movement*) states ; "on the whole, the Faraizi and the Ahl-e-Hadith appear to have been largely indifferent to each other.....Although the Faraizi are followers of the Hanafi School of law, they do not oppose the idea of following prophetic traditions. The Ahl-e-Hadith does not appear to have come into direct conflict with the *Faraizi*." Besides, writers have identified *Ahl-e-Hadīth* with three main principles: They place emphasis on the principle of *Tawhīd* (unity of Allah); they believe in direct *Ijtihād* (in the light of Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*), accepted the four main *Sunnī* schools of law in the light of Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. They want to eradicate from the society all un-Islamic customs and traditions. Writers and chroniclers have reported different titles for the Nawāb Ṣiddīq Hasan in regard to his works, views and contributions, some of them called him leader of the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* in the nineteenth century India; others gave him the name of *Wahhābī*; and there were some whose historical assessment can be interpreted as describing him the successor of Ḥājī Sharī‘atullah, the founder of *Farā'izī* movement in Bengal. The real nature of the above differing remarks about the Nawāb and *Ahl-e-Hadīth* and whether it were

the *Ahl-e-Hadīth* only who enunciated the above three main principles, or there were some other people too who shared their opinions, need to have a bird's-eye view of the entire Muslim society; to look for the likely causes responsible for its decadence, and also find out what steps were taken, and who took them, to resuscitate it. The following account would reveal that the factors that brought about Muslim degeneration in India were also responsible for Muslims' loss of power in other parts of the world.

After a brief period, people began to rely mostly on the works of the four *A'immah* Abū Hanīfa (R.A.), Mālik Ibn Anas (R.A.), Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (R.A.), and Imām Shāfi'i (R.A.). Many factors in various parts of the world provided opportunities for these four schools to flourish. The outcome of these tragic issues- to confine religious ideas to only four schools- was a complete check on the intellectual growth of the Muslim Ummah. Muslims never remained in any era without some appropriate, guidance which came through people like Al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328 C.E.), Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, Al-Suyūtī, Shāh Walīyullah (1703-1762 C.E.), 'Abdul Wahhāb (1703-1792 C.E.), Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī al-Shawkānī, Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd (1786-1831 C.E.), Muḥammad 'Abduh and many others. They attempted, in one way or another, to reform the Socio-religious, political, economic and educational systems of the Muslims and performed their duties as best as they could. In the light of this background, this fact can be established that the reforms introduced by Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb al Najdī, Hājī Sharīatullah, Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd, Sayyid Nazīr Husayn Batalwī and Muḥammad Siddīq Ḥasan Khān were not a novelty- these were part of the *Tajdīd-i-Dīn* (renovation of religion), a procedure which the Prophet (peace be upon him) of Islam enunciated more than 1400 years ago. *Ahl-e-Hadīth*, *Farāizī* and the followers of *Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah*, were once termed as "Wahhābī," "traitors" and "religious fanatics" and were executed on these bases by Ranjit Singh and the British Government.

Farāizī means one who emphasizes the practice of the five pillars of Islam, i.e. *Tawhīd* (belief in the unity of Allah), *Namāz* (prayer), *Roza* (fasting), *Zakat* (legal alms) and Pilgrimage to Makkah. *Ahl-e-Hadīth* place great emphasis on the unity of Allah, fight against sinful innovations.

'Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth emphasise on the unity (*Tawhīd*) of Allah, and a denial of occult power and knowledge of the hidden things (*'ilm-ul-ghayb*) to any of

his creatures. They criticised on the belief in saint worship, which has been so commonly adopted throughout India. They rejected to follow the four recognized schools of canon law blindly, and instructed to follow the Qur'ān and traditions, as accepted by the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), are the only worthy guide for true Muslims. They reject the common notion that *Taqlīd* of the founders of these four schools are of final authority. '*Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth*' accepted the four Sunni Schools in the light of Qur'an and *Hadīth*. It is wrong to say that '*Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth*' outrightly rejected the four Sunni Schools of Jurisprudence rather they say there is no question of rejection of any *fatwa* or *Qiyās* if it is based in the light of Qur'ān and authentic *Aḥādīth*. '*Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth*' rejected of following any particular 'Imām' and say our 'Imām' is the beloved Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), and say we do firmly believed the Taglid of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him).

Ibn Taymiyyah's main intention was to follow the Qur'ān and *Aḥādīth* "to describe Allah only as He has described Himself, in His Book and as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has described Him in the Sunnah". His doctrine was centred on and inspired by the spirit of Hanbalism, a doctrine of synthesis or of conciliation "the happy mean" (*wast*), which would accord to each School its rightful place in a strongly hierarchical whole in conformity with the precepts of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. "The dogmatic theologians", "based their system on reason (*aql*), the traditionists based theirs on hadith (*nakl*), and the Sufis theirs on free-will (*irada*)"

The *Muwahhidūn* (Unitarians) or *Salafīs* strongly disagreed with their opponents on the question of *Tawassul* (intercession). For Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdul-Wahhāb, *Ibādah* (worship) refers to all the utterances and actions- inward as well as out word- that Allah desires and commands. The common practice of seeking intercession from dead saints is prohibited, as is excessive devotion at their tombs, the doctrine of intercession led the *Muwahhidūn* to denounce vehemently the widely followed practice of visitation of tombs and the building of domes near them. Initially Muḥammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb had considered visitation, if performed in the true spirit of Islam, a pious and praiseworthy act. However, the *Muwahhidūn* believe that people have transformed the prayers for the dead into prayers to the dead; gravesites became places of assembly for worshipers. The excessive veneration of the deceased who enjoyed a holy reputation was a first step that had led people to idol-worship in the past. To avoid polytheism, they consider it an obligation to destroy all such

existing tombs. The Muwahhidūn also believe that mere affiliation with Islam is not sufficient in itself to prevent a Muslim from becoming a polytheist. The Unitarians developed strict procedures to direct the discussion of doctrinal issues. To judge religious questions, they first search the texts of the *Qur'ān* and the *Aḥadīth* and define their views accordingly. If reference is not found in these texts, they look for the consensus of the “*virtuous ancestors*”, particularly the Companions and their successors; Ijmā, however, is restricted to those who follow the *Qur'ān* and the traditions.

When it is evident that worship is due to Allah alone, then to associate anyone in that worship is *Shirk* (polytheism). *Shirk* is evil, no matter what the object is, it may be ‘*King* or *Prophet*, or Sufi Saint or tree or tomb. It is also *Shirk* to seek refuge with anyone other than Allah. To call and seek help from other than Allah is defined by Ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb as ‘*Grave Shirk*’ (*Shirk al-Akbar*). Ibn Wahhāb further says that no one is more misguided than the one who calls other than Allah and the person called will have enmity with the caller on the day of judgement. ‘Abdul Wahhāb defines hypocrisy as a ‘*Small Shirk*’ (*Shirk al-Asghar*) and says that the pious men are more prone to hypocrisy. A hypocrite, he says, is one who ostensibly prays for the sake of Allah but his real motive is to show piety.

Their main doctrines are enumerated below:

- Strongly opposed the position of *Taqlīd-i-Shakhshi*.
- Muhsinul Mulk said: ‘if we do not cleanse our religion of this *sin* (*Taqlīd*), it is unjust for us to criticize those of other religions’.
- Prohibited *Urs*, *Qawwalī* and Saint Worship.
- Against *B-e Shara* ‘ Sufis (un Islamic Sufi Practices).
- Opposed elaborate ceremonies and adopted simple marriage and modest dowry
- Styles of prayer as stated in the *Aḥadīth* and *Sunnah*: say *Āmīn* loudly, lift hands before bowing, fold hand.
- ‘*Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth* allowed the offering of prayers even the Imam is known to be a *Fāsik*.
- ‘*Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth* accepted all the four Imams and Imams of the Ahl bait in the light of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*.
- ‘*Ulamā-e-Ahl-e-Hadīth* does believe in *Ijtihād*.